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THE

WORKS

OF

ADAM SMITH, LL.D.

AND F.R.S. OF LONDON AND EDINBURGH:

ONE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF HIS MAJESTY'S CUSTOMS IN SCOTLAND;

AND FORMERLY PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS

BY DUGALD STEWART,

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY, AND FELLOW OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY, OF EDINBURGH, &c. &c. &c.

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INQUIRY

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BOOK IV.

CHAP. IX.

Of the agricultural Syſtems, or of thoſe Syſtems of political Œconomy, which repreſent the Produce of Land as either the ſole or the principal Source of the Revenue and Wealth of every Country.

THE agricultural ſyſtems of political œconomy will not require ſo long an explanation as that which I have thought it neceſſary to beſtow upon the mercantile or commercial ſyſtem.

That ſyſtem which repreſents the produce of land as the ſole ſource of the revenue and wealth of every country has, ſo far as I know, never been adopted by any nation, and it at preſent exiſts

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only in the ſpeculations of a few men of great learning and ingenuity in France. It would not, ſurely, be worth while to examine at great length the errors of a ſyſtem which never has done, and probably never will do any harm in any part of the world. I ſhall endeavour to explain, however, as diſtinctly as I can, the great outlines of this very ingenious ſyſtem.

Mr. Colbert, the famous miniſter of Lewis XIV., was a man of probity, of great induſtry and knowledge of detail; of great experience and acuteneſs in the examination of public accounts, and of abilities, in ſhort, every way fitted for introducing method and good order into the collection and expenditure of the public revenue. That miniſter had unfortunately embraced all the prejudices of the mercantile ſyſtem, in its nature and eſſence a ſyſtem of reſtraint and regulation, and ſuch as could ſcarce fail to be agreeable to a laborious and plodding man of buſineſs, who had been accuſtomed to regulate the different departments of public offices, and to eſtabliſh the neceſſary checks and controuls for confining each to its proper ſphere. The induſtry and commerce of a great country he endeavoured to regulate upon the ſame model as the departments of a public office; and inſtead of allowing every man to purſue his own intereſt his own way, upon the liberal plan of equality, liberty and juſtice, he beſtowed upon certain branches of induſtry extraordinary privileges, while he laid others under as extraordinary reſtraints. He was not only diſpoſed, like other European miniſters, to encourage

encourage more the induſtry of the towns than that of the country; but, in order to ſupport the induſtry of the towns, he was willing even to depreſs and keep down that of the country. In order to render proviſions cheap to the inhabitants of the towns, and thereby to encourage manufactures and foreign commerce, he prohibited altogether the exportation of corn, and thus excluded the inhabitants of the country from every foreign market for by far the moſt important part of the produce of their induſtry. This prohibition, joined to the reſtraints impoſed by the ancient provincial laws of France upon the tranſportation of corn from one province to another, and to the arbitrary and degrading taxes which are levied upon the cultivators in almoſt all the provinces, diſcouraged and kept down the agriculture of that country very much below the ſtate to which it would naturally have riſen in ſo very fertile a ſoil and ſo very happy a climate. This ſtate of diſcouragement and depreſſion was felt more or leſs in every different part of the country, and many different inquiries were ſet on foot concerning the cauſes of it. One of thoſe cauſes appeared to be the preference given, by the inſtitutions of Mr. Colbert, to the induſtry of the towns above that of the country.

If the rod be bent too much one way, ſays the proverb, in order to make it ſtraight you muſt bend it as much the other. The French philoſophers, who have propoſed the ſyſtem which repreſents agriculture as the ſole ſource of the revenue and wealth of every country, ſeem to

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have adopted this proverbial maxim; and as in the plan of Mr. Colbert the induſtry of the towns was certainly over-valued in compariſon with that of the country: ſo in their ſyſtem it ſeems to be as certainly under-valued.

The different orders of people who have ever been ſuppoſed to contribute in any reſpect towards the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, they divide into three claſſes. The firſt is the claſs of the proprietors of land. The ſecond is the claſs of the cultivators, of farmers and country labourers, whom they honour with the peculiar appellation of the productive claſs. The third is the claſs of artificers, manufacturers and merchants, whom they endeavour to degrade by the humiliating appellation of the barren or unproductive claſs.

The claſs of proprietors contributes to the annual produce by the expence which they may occaſionally lay out upon the improvement of the land, upon the buildings, drains, encloſures and other ameliorations, which they may either make or maintain upon it, and by means of which the cultivators are enabled, with the ſame capital, to raiſe a greater produce, and conſequently to pay a greater rent. This advanced rent may be conſidered as the intereſt or profit due to the proprietor upon the expence or capital which he thus employs in the improvement of his land. Such expences are in this ſyſtem called ground expences (depenſes foncieres).

The cultivators or farmers contribute to the annual produce by what are in this ſyſtem called the

the original and annual expences (depenſes primitives et depenſes annuelles) which they lay out upon the cultivation of the land. The original expences conſiſt in the inſtruments of huſbandry, in the ſtock of cattle, in the ſeed, and in the maintenance of the farmer's family, ſervants and cattle, during at leaſt a great part of the firſt year of his occupancy, or till he can receive ſome return from the land. The annual expences conſiſt in the ſeed, in the wear and tear of the inſtruments of huſbandry, and in the annual maintenance of the farmer's ſervants and cattle, and of his family too, ſo far as any part of them can be conſidered as ſervants employed in cultivation. That part of the produce of the land which remains to him after paying the rent, ought to be ſufficient, firſt to replace to him within a reaſonable time, at leaſt during the term of his occupancy, the whole of his original expences, together with the ordinary profits of ſtock; and, ſecondly, to replace to him annually the whole of his annual expences, together likewiſe with the ordinary profits of ſtock. Thoſe two ſorts of expences are two capitals which the farmer employs in cultivation; and unleſs they are regularly reſtored to him, together with a reaſonable profit, he cannot carry on his employment upon a level with other employments; but, from a regard to his own intereſt, muſt deſert it as ſoon as poſſible, and ſeek ſome other. That part of the produce of the land which is thus neceſſary for enabling the farmer to continue his buſineſs, ought to be conſidered as a fund ſacred

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to cultivation, which if the landlord violates, he neceſſarily reduces the produce of his own land, and in a few years not only diſables the farmer from paying this racked rent, but from paying the reaſonable rent which he might otherwiſe have got for his land. The rent which properly belongs to the landlord, is no more than the neat produce which remains after paying in the completeſt manner all the neceſſary expences which muſt be previouſly laid out in order to raiſe the groſs, or the whole produce. It is becauſe the labour of the cultivators, over and above paying completely all thoſe neceſſary expences, affords a neat produce of this kind, that this claſs of people are in this ſyſtem peculiarly diſtinguiſhed by the honourable appellation of the productive claſs. Their original and annual expences are for the ſame reaſon called, in this ſyſtem, productive expences, becauſe, over and above replacing their own value, they occaſion the annual reproduction of this neat produce.

The ground expences, as they are called, or what the landlord lays out upon the improvement of his land, are in this ſyſtem too honoured with the appellation of productive expences. Till the whole of thoſe expences, together with the ordinary profits of ſtock, have been completely repaid to him by the advanced rent which he gets from his land, that advanced rent ought to be regarded as ſacred and inviolable, both by the church and by the King; ought to be ſubject neither to tithe nor to taxation. If it is otherwiſe, by diſcouraging the improvement of land, the

the church discourages the future increase of her own tithes, and the King the future increase of his own taxes. As in a well-ordered state of things, therefore, those ground expences, over and above reproducing in the completest manner their own value, occasion likewise after a certain time a reproduction of a neat produce, they are in this system considered as productive expences.

The ground expences of the landlord, however, together with the original and the annual expences of the farmer, are the only three sorts of expences which in this system are considered as productive. All other expences and all other orders of people, even those who in the common apprehensions of men are regarded as the most productive, are in this account of things represented as altogether barren and unproductive.

Artificers and manufacturers, in particular, whose industry, in the common apprehensions of men, increases so much the value of the rude produce of land, are in this system represented as a class of people altogether barren and unproductive. Their labour, it is said, replaces only the stock which employs them, together with its ordinary profits. That stock consists in the materials, tools, and wages, advanced to them by their employer; and is the fund destined for their employment and maintenance. Its profits are the fund destined for the maintenance of their employer. Their employer, as he advances to them the stock of materials, tools and wages necessary for their employment, so he advances

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to himself what is necessary for his own maintenance, and this maintenance he generally proportions to the profit which he expects to make by the price of their work. Unless its price repays to him the maintenance which he advances to himself, as well as the materials, tools and wages which he advances to his workmen, it evidently does not repay to him the whole expence which he lays out upon it. The profits of manufacturing stock, therefore, are not, like the rent of land, a neat produce which remains after completely repaying the whole expence which must be laid out in order to obtain them. The stock of the farmer yields him a profit as well as that of the master manufacturer; and it yields a rent likewise to another person, which that of the master manufacturer does not. The expence, therefore, laid out in employing and maintaining artificers and manufacturers, does no more than continue, if one may say so, the existence of its own value, and does not produce any new value. It is therefore altogether a barren and unproductive expence. The expence, on the contrary, laid out in employing farmers and country labourers, over and above continuing the existence of its own value, produces a new value, the rent of the landlord. It is therefore a productive expence.

Mercantile stock is equally barren and unproductive with manufacturing stock. It only continues the existence of its own value, without producing any new value. Its profits are only the repayment of the maintenance which its employer

employer advances to himſelf during the time that he employs it, or till he receives the returns of it. They are only the repayment of a part of the expence which muſt be laid out in employing it. CHAP. IX.

The labour of artificers and manufacturers never adds any thing to the value of the whole annual amount of the rude produce of the land. It adds indeed greatly to the value of ſome particular parts of it. But the conſumption which in the mean time it occaſions of other parts, is preciſely equal to the value which it adds to thoſe parts; ſo that the value of the whole amount is not, at any one moment of time, in the leaſt augmented by it. The perſon who works the lace of a pair of fine ruffles, for example, will ſometimes raiſe the value of perhaps a pennyworth of flax to thirty pounds ſterling. But though at firſt ſight he appears thereby to multiply the value of a part of the rude produce about ſeven thouſand and two hundred times, he in reality adds nothing to the value of the whole annual amount of the rude produce. The working of that lace coſts him perhaps two years labour. The thirty pounds which he gets for it when it is finiſhed, is no more than the repayment of the ſubſiſtence which he advances to himſelf during the two years that he is employed about it. The value which, by every day's, month's, or year's labour, he adds to the flax, does no more than replace the value of his own conſumption during that day, month, or year. At no moment of time, therefore, does he add

any

any thing to the value of the whole annual amount of the rude produce of the land: the portion of that produce which he is continually conſuming, being always equal to the value which he is continually producing. The extreme poverty of the greater part of the perſons employed in this expenſive, though trifling manufacture, may ſatisfy us that the price of their work does not in ordinary caſes exceed the value of their ſubſiſtence. It is otherwiſe with the work of farmers and country labourers. The rent of the landlord is a value, which, in ordinary caſes, it is continually producing, over and above replacing, in the moſt complete manner, the whole conſumption, the whole expence laid out upon the employment and maintenance both of the workmen and of their employer.

Artificers, manufacturers and merchants, can augment the revenue and wealth of their ſociety, by parſimony only; or, as it is expreſſed in this ſyſtem, by privation, that is, by depriving themſelves of a part of the funds deſtined for their own ſubſiſtence. They annually reproduce nothing but thoſe funds. Unleſs, therefore, they annually ſave ſome part of them, unleſs they annually deprive themſelves of the enjoyment of ſome part of them, the revenue and wealth of their ſociety can never be in the ſmalleſt degree augmented by means of their induſtry. Farmers and country labourers, on the contrary, may enjoy completely the whole funds deſtined for their own ſubſiſtence, and yet augment at the ſame time the revenue and wealth of their ſociety.

Over

Over and above what is deſtined for their own ſubſiſtence, their induſtry annually affords a neat produce, of which the augmentation neceſſarily augments the revenue and wealth of their ſociety. Nations, therefore, which, like France or England, conſiſt in a great meaſure of proprietors and cultivators, can be enriched by induſtry and enjoyment. Nations, on the contrary, which, like Holland and Hamburgh, are compoſed chiefly of merchants, artificers and manufacturers, can grow rich only through parſimony and privation. As the intereſt of nations ſo differently circumſtanced, is very different, ſo is likewiſe the common character of the people. In thoſe of the former kind, liberality, frankneſs, and good fellowſhip, naturally make a part of that common character. In the latter, narrowneſs, meanneſs, and a ſelfiſh diſpoſition, averſe to all ſocial pleaſure and enjoyment.

The unproductive claſs, that of merchants, artificers and manufacturers, is maintained and employed altogether at the expence of the two other claſſes, of that of proprietors, and of that of cultivators. They furniſh it both with the materials of its work and with the fund of its ſubſiſtence, with the corn and cattle which it conſumes while it is employed about that work. The proprietors and cultivators finally pay both the wages of all the workmen of the unproductive claſs, and the profits of all their employers. Thoſe workmen and their employers are properly the ſervants of the proprietors and cultivators. They are only ſervants who work without doors,

as

as menial ſervants work within. Both the one and the other, however, are equally maintained at the expence of the ſame maſters. The labour of both is equally unproductive. It adds nothing to the value of the ſum total of the rude produce of the land. Inſtead of increaſing the value of that ſum total, it is a charge and expence which muſt be paid out of it.

The unproductive claſs, however, is not only uſeful, but greatly uſeful to the other two claſſes. By means of the induſtry of merchants, artificers and manufacturers, the proprietors and cultivators can purchaſe both the foreign goods and the manufactured produce of their own country which they have occaſion for, with the produce of a much ſmaller quantity of their own labour, than what they would be obliged to employ, if they were to attempt, in an aukward and unſkilful manner, either to import the one, or to make the other for their own uſe. By means of the unproductive claſs, the cultivators are delivered from many cares which would otherwiſe diſtract their attention from the cultivation of land. The ſuperiority of produce, which, in conſequence of this undivided attention, they are enabled to raiſe, is fully ſufficient to pay the whole expence which the maintenance and employment of the unproductive claſs coſts either the proprietors, or themſelves. The induſtry of merchants, artificers and manufacturers, though in its own nature altogether unproductive, yet contributes in this manner indirectly to increaſe the produce of the land. It increaſes the pro-

ductive powers of productive labour, by leaving it at liberty to confine itſelf to its proper employment, the cultivation of land; and the plough goes frequently the eaſier and the better by means of the labour of the man whoſe buſineſs is moſt remote from the plough.

It can never be the intereſt of the proprietors and cultivators to reſtrain or to diſcourage in any reſpect the induſtry of merchants, artificers and manufacturers. The greater the liberty which this unproductive claſs enjoys, the greater will be the competition in all the different trades which compoſe it, and the cheaper will the other two claſſes be ſupplied, both with foreign goods and with the manufactured produce of their own country.

It can never be the intereſt of the unproductive claſs to oppreſs the other two claſſes. It is the ſurplus produce of the land, or what remains after deducting the maintenance, firſt, of the cultivators, and afterwards, of the proprietors, that maintains and employs the unproductive claſs. The greater this ſurplus, the greater muſt likewiſe be the maintenance and employment of that claſs. The eſtabliſhment of perfect juſtice, of perfect liberty, and of perfect equality, is the very ſimple ſecret which moſt effectually ſecures the higheſt degree of proſperity to all the three claſſes.

The merchants, artificers and manufacturers of thoſe mercantile ſtates which, like Holland and Hamburgh, conſiſt chiefly of this unproductive claſs, are in the ſame manner maintained and

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and employed altogether at the expence of the proprietors and cultivators of land. The only difference is, that thoſe proprietors and cultivators are, the greater part of them, placed at a moſt inconvenient diſtance from the merchants, artificers and manufacturers whom they ſupply with the materials of their work and the fund of their ſubſiſtence, are the inhabitants of other countries, and the ſubjects of other governments.

Such mercantile ſtates, however, are not only uſeful, but greatly uſeful to the inhabitants of thoſe other countries. They fill up, in ſome meaſure, a very important void, and ſupply the place of the merchants, artificers and manufacturers, whom the inhabitants of thoſe countries ought to find at home, but whom, from ſome defect in their policy, they do not find at home.

It can never be the intereſt of thoſe landed nations, if I may call them ſo, to diſcourage or diſtreſs the induſtry of ſuch mercantile ſtates, by impoſing high duties upon their trade, or upon the commodities which they furniſh. Such duties, by rendering thoſe commodities dearer, could ſerve only to ſink the real value of the ſurplus produce of their own land, with which, or, what comes to the ſame thing, with the price of which, thoſe commodities are purchaſed. Such duties could ſerve only to diſcourage the increaſe of that ſurplus produce, and conſequently the improvement and cultivation of their own land. The moſt effectual expedient, on the contrary, for raiſing the value of that ſurplus produce,

duce, for encouraging its increaſe, and conſequently the improvement and cultivation of their own land, would be to allow the moſt perfect freedom to the trade of all ſuch mercantile nations. CHAP. IX.

This perfect freedom of trade would even be the moſt effectual expedient for ſupplying them, in due time, with all the artificers, manufacturers and merchants, whom they wanted at home, and for filling up in the propereſt and moſt advantageous manner that very important void which they felt there.

The continual increaſe of the ſurplus produce of their land, would, in due time, create a greater capital than what could be employed with the ordinary rate of profit in the improvement and cultivation of land; and the ſurplus part of it would naturally turn itſelf to the employment of artificers and manufacturers at home. But thoſe artificers and manufacturers, finding at home both the materials of their work and the fund of their ſubſiſtence, might immediately, even with much leſs art and ſkill, be able to work as cheap as the like artificers and manufacturers of ſuch mercantile ſtates, who had both to bring from a greater diſtance. Even though, from want of art and ſkill, they might not for ſome time be able to work as cheap, yet, finding a market at home, they might be able to ſell their work there as cheap as that of the artificers and manufacturers of ſuch mercantile ſtates, which could not be brought to that market but from ſo great a diſtance; and as their art and ſkill im-

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proved, they would ſoon be able to ſell it cheaper. The artificers and manufacturers of ſuch mercantile ſtates, therefore, would immediately be rivalled in the market of thoſe landed nations, and ſoon after underſold and juſtled out of it altogether. The cheapneſs of the manufactures of thoſe landed nations, in conſequence of the gradual improvements of art and ſkill, would, in due time, extend their ſale beyond the home market, and carry them to many foreign markets, from which they would in the ſame manner gradually juſtle out many of the manufactures of ſuch mercantile nations.

This continual increaſe both of the rude and manufactured produce of thoſe landed nations would in due time create a greater capital than could, with the ordinary rate of profit, be employed either in agriculture or in manufactures. The ſurplus of this capital would naturally turn itſelf to foreign trade, and be employed in exporting, to foreign countries, ſuch parts of the rude and manufactured produce of its own country, as exceeded the demand of the home market. In the exportation of the produce of their own country, the merchants of a landed nation would have an advantage of the ſame kind over thoſe of mercantile nations, which its artificers and manufacturers had over the artificers and manufacturers of ſuch nations; the advantage of finding at home that cargo, and thoſe ſtores and proviſions, which the others were obliged to ſeek for at a diſtance. With inferior art and ſkill in navigation, therefore, they would be

be able to fell that cargo as cheap in foreign markets as the merchants of fuch mercantile nations; and with equal art and fkill they would be able to fell it cheaper. They would foon, therefore, rival thofe mercantile nations in this branch of foreign trade, and in due time would juftle them out of it altogether.

According to this liberal and generous fyftem, therefore, the moft advantageous method in which a landed nation can raife up artificers, manufacturers, and merchants of its own, is to grant the moft perfect freedom of trade to the artificers, manufacturers and merchants of all other nations. It thereby raifes the value of the furplus produce of its own land, of which the continual increafe gradually eftablifhes a fund, which in due time neceffarily raifes up all the artificers, manufacturers, and merchants whom it has occafion for.

When a landed nation, on the contrary, oppreffes either by high duties or by prohibitions the trade of foreign nations, it neceffarily hurts its own intereft in two different ways. Firft, by raifing the price of all foreign goods and of all forts of manufactures, it neceffarily finks the real value of the furplus produce of its own land, with which, or, what comes to the fame thing, with the price of which, it purchafes thofe foreign goods and manufactures. Secondly, by giving a fort of monopoly of the home market to its own merchants, artificers and manufacturers, it raifes the rate of mercantile and manufacturing profit

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in proportion to that of agricultural profit, and conſequently either draws from agriculture a part of the capital which had before been employed in it, or hinders from going to it a part of what would otherwiſe have gone to it. This policy, therefore, diſcourages agriculture in two different ways; firſt, by ſinking the real value of its produce, and thereby lowering the rate of its profit; and, ſecondly, by raiſing the rate of profit in all other employments. Agriculture is rendered leſs advantageous, and trade and manufactures more advantageous than they otherwiſe would be; and every man is tempted by his own intereſt to turn, as much as he can, both his capital and his induſtry from the former to the latter employments.

Though, by this oppreſſive policy, a landed nation ſhould be able to raiſe up artificers, manufacturers and merchants of its own, ſomewhat ſooner than it could do by the freedom of trade; a matter, however, which is not a little doubtful; yet it would raiſe them up, if one may ſay ſo, prematurely, and before it was perfectly ripe for them. By raiſing up too haſtily one ſpecies of induſtry, it would depreſs another more valuable ſpecies of induſtry. By raiſing up too haſtily a ſpecies of induſtry which only replaces the ſtock which employs it, together with the ordinary profit, it would depreſs a ſpecies of induſtry which, over and above replacing that ſtock with its profit, affords likewiſe a neat produce, a free rent to the landlord. It would depreſs productive

tive labour, by encouraging too haſtily that labour which is altogether barren and unproductive.

In what manner, according to this ſyſtem, the ſum total of the annual produce of the land is diſtributed among the three claſſes above mentioned, and in what manner the labour of the unproductive claſs does no more than replace the value of its own conſumption, without increaſing in any reſpect the value of that ſum total, is repreſented by Mr. Queſnai, the very ingenious and profound author of this ſyſtem, in ſome arithmetical formularies. The firſt of theſe formularies, which by way of eminence he peculiarly diſtinguiſhes by the name of the Œconomical Table, repreſents the manner in which he ſuppoſes this diſtribution takes place, in a ſtate of the moſt perfect liberty, and therefore of the higheſt proſperity; in a ſtate where the annual produce is ſuch as to afford the greateſt poſſible neat produce, and where each claſs enjoys its proper ſhare of the whole annual produce. Some ſubſequent formularies repreſent the manner, in which, he ſuppoſes, this diſtribution is made in different ſtates of reſtraint and regulation; in which, either the claſs of proprietors, or the barren and unproductive claſs is more favoured than the claſs of cultivators, and in which, either the one or the other encroaches more or leſs upon the ſhare which ought properly to belong to this productive claſs. Every ſuch encroachment, every violation of that natural diſtribution, which the moſt perfect

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liberty would eſtabliſh, muſt, according to this ſyſtem, neceſſarily degrade more or leſs, from one year to another, the value and ſum total of the annual produce, and muſt neceſſarily occaſion a gradual declenſion in the real wealth and revenue of the ſociety; a declenſion of which the progreſs muſt be quicker or ſlower, according to the degree of this encroachment, according as that natural diſtribution, which the moſt perfect liberty would eſtabliſh, is more or leſs violated. Thoſe ſubſequent formularies repreſent the different degrees of declenſion, which, according to this ſyſtem, correſpond to the different degrees in which this natural diſtribution of things is violated.

Some ſpeculative phyſicians ſeem to have imagined that the health of the human body could be preſerved only by a certain preciſe regimen of diet and exerciſe, of which every, the ſmalleſt, violation neceſſarily occaſioned ſome degree of diſeaſe or diſorder porportioned to the degree of the violation. Experience, however, would ſeem to ſhow, that the human body frequently preſerves, to all appearance at leaſt, the moſt perfect ſtate of health under a vaſt variety of different regimens; even under ſome which are generally believed to be very far from being perfectly wholeſome. But the healthful ſtate of the human body, it would ſeem, contains in itſelf ſome unknown principle of preſervation, capable either of preventing or of correcting, in many reſpects, the bad effects even of a very faulty regimen. Mr. Queſnai, who was himſelf a phyſician,

fician, and a very ſpeculative phyſician, ſeems to have entertained a notion of the ſame kind concerning the political body, and to have imagined that it would thrive and proſper only under a certain preciſe regimen, the exact regimen of perfect liberty and perfect juſtice. He ſeems not to have conſidered that in the political body, the natural effort which every man is continually making to better his own condition, is a principle of preſervation capable of preventing and correcting, in many reſpects, the bad effects of a political œconomy, in ſome degree both partial and oppreſſive. Such a political œconomy, though it no doubt retards more or leſs, is not always capable of ſtopping altogether the natural progreſs of a nation towards wealth and proſperity, and ſtill leſs of making it go backwards. If a nation could not proſper without the enjoyment of perfect liberty and perfect juſtice, there is not in the world a nation which could ever have proſpered. In a political body, however, the wiſdom of nature has fortunately made ample proviſion for remedying many of the bad effects of the folly and injuſtice of man; in the ſame manner as it has done in the natural body, for remedying thoſe of his ſloth and intemperance.

The capital error of this ſyſtem, however, ſeems to lie in its repreſenting the claſs of artificers, manufacturers and merchants, as altogether barren and unproductive. The following obſervations may ſerve to ſhow the impropriety of this repreſentation.

Firſt, this claſs, it is acknowledged, repro-

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duces annually the value of its own annual consumption, and continues, at leaſt, the exiſtence of the ſtock or capital which maintains and employs it. But upon this account alone the denomination of barren or unproductive ſhould ſeem to be very improperly applied to it. We ſhould not call a marriage barren or unproductive, though it produced only a ſon and a daughter, to replace the father and mother, and though it did not increaſe the number of the human ſpecies, but only continued it as it was before. Farmers and country labourers, indeed, over and above the ſtock which maintains and employs them, reproduce annually a neat produce, a free rent to the landlord. As a marriage which affords three children is certainly more productive than one which affords only two; ſo the labour of farmers and country labourers is certainly more productive than that of merchants, artificers and manufacturers. The ſuperior produce of the one claſs, however, does not render the other barren or unproductive.

Secondly, it ſeems, upon this account, altogether improper to conſider artificers, manufacturers and merchants, in the ſame light as menial ſervants. The labour of menial ſervants does not continue the exiſtence of the fund which maintains and employs them. Their maintenance and employment is altogether at the expence of their maſters, and the work which they perform is not of a nature to repay that expence. That work conſiſts in ſervices which periſh generally in the very inſtant of their performance, and does not fix or realize itſelf in any vendible commodity

commodity which can replace the value of their wages and maintenance. The labour, on the contrary, of artificers, manufacturers and merchants, naturally does fix and realize itself in some such vendible commodity. It is upon this account that, in the chapter in which I treat of productive and unproductive labour, I have classed artificers, manufacturers and merchants, among the productive labourers, and menial servants among the barren or unproductive.

Thirdly, it seems, upon every supposition, improper to say, that the labour of artificers, manufacturers and merchants, does not increase the real revenue of the society. Though we should suppose, for example, as it seems to be supposed in this system, that the value of the daily, monthly, and yearly consumption of this class was exactly equal to that of its daily, monthly, and yearly production; yet it would not from thence follow that its labour added nothing to the real revenue, to the real value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. An artificer, for example, who, in the first six months after harvest, executes ten pounds worth of work, though he should in the same time consume ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries, yet really adds the value of ten pounds to the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. While he has been consuming a half yearly revenue of ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries, he has produced an equal value of work capable of purchasing, either to himself or to some other person, an equal half yearly revenue. The value, therefore, of what

has been consumed and produced during these six months is equal, not to ten, but to twenty pounds. It is possible, indeed, that no more than ten pounds worth of this value, may ever have existed at any one moment of time. But if the ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries, which were consumed by the artificer, had been consumed by a soldier or by a menial servant, the value of that part of the annual produce which existed at the end of the six months, would have been ten pounds less than it actually is in consequence of the labour of the artificer. Though the value of what the artificer produces, therefore, should not at any one moment of time be supposed greater than the value he consumes, yet at every moment of time the actually existing value of goods in the market is, in consequence of what he produces, greater than it otherwise would be.

When the patrons of this system assert, that the consumption of artificers, manufacturers and merchants, is equal to the value of what they produce, they probably mean no more than that their revenue, or the fund destined for their consumption, is equal to it. But if they had expressed themselves more accurately, and only asserted, that the revenue of this class was equal to the value of what they produced, it might readily have occurred to the reader, that what would naturally be saved out of this revenue, must necessarily increase more or less the real wealth of the society. In order, therefore, to make out something like an argument, it was necessary that they should express themselves as they

they have done; and this argument, even ſuppoſing things actually were as it ſeems to preſume them to be, turns out to be a very inconcluſive one.

Fourthly, farmers and country labourers can no more augment, without parſimony, the real revenue, the annual produce of the land and labour of their ſociety, than artificers, manufacturers and merchants. The annual produce of the land and labour of any ſociety can be augmented only in two ways; either, firſt, by ſome improvement in the productive powers of the uſeful labour actually maintained within it; or, ſecondly, by ſome increaſe in the quantity of that labour.

The improvement in the productive powers of uſeful labour depends, firſt, upon the improvement in the ability of the workman; and, ſecondly, upon that of the machinery with which he works. But the labour of artificers and manufacturers, as it is capable of being more ſubdivided, and the labour of each workman reduced to a greater ſimplicity of operation, than that of farmers and country labourers, ſo it is likewiſe capable of both theſe ſorts of improvement in a much higher degree *. In this reſpect, therefore, the claſs of cultivators can have no ſort of advantage over that of artificers and manufacturers.

The increaſe in the quantity of uſeful labour actually employed within any ſociety, muſt de-

* See Book I. Chap. I.

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pend altogether upon the increaſe of the capital which employs it; and the increaſe of that capital again muſt be exactly equal to the amount of the ſavings from the revenue, either of the particular perſons who manage and direct the employment of that capital, or of ſome other perſons who lend it to them. If merchants, artificers and manufacturers are, as this ſyſtem ſeems to ſuppoſe, naturally more inclined to parſimony and ſaving than proprietors and cultivators, they are, ſo far, more likely to augment the quantity of uſeful labour employed within their ſociety, and conſequently to increaſe its real revenue, the annual produce of its land and labour.

Fifthly and laſtly, though the revenue of the inhabitants of every country was ſuppoſed to conſiſt altogether, as this ſyſtem ſeems to ſuppoſe, in the quantity of ſubſiſtence which their induſtry could procure to them; yet, even upon this ſuppoſition, the revenue of a trading and manufacturing country muſt, other things being equal, always be much greater than that of one without trade or manufactures. By means of trade and manufactures, a greater quantity of ſubſiſtence can be annually imported into a particular country than what its own lands, in the actual ſtate of their cultivation, could afford. The inhabitants of a town, though they frequently poſſeſs no lands of their own, yet draw to themſelves by their induſtry ſuch a quantity of the rude produce of the lands of other people as ſupplies them, not only with the materials of their work, but with the fund of their ſubſiſtence.

What a town always is with regard to the country in its neighbourhood, one independent ſtate or country may frequently be with regard to other independent ſtates or countries. It is thus that Holland draws a great part of its ſubſiſtence from other countries; live cattle from Holſtein and Jutland, and corn from almoſt all the different countries of Europe. A ſmall quantity of manufactured produce purchaſes a great quantity of rude produce. A trading and manufacturing country, therefore, naturally purchaſes with a ſmall part of its manufactured produce a great part of the rude produce of other countries; while, on the contrary, a country without trade and manufactures is generally obliged to purchaſe, at the expence of a great part of its rude produce, a very ſmall part of the manufactured produce of other countries. The one exports what can ſubſiſt and accommodate but a very few, and imports the ſubſiſtence and accommodation of a great number. The other exports the accommodation and ſubſiſtence of a great number, and imports that of a very few only. The inhabitants of the one muſt always enjoy a much greater quantity of ſubſiſtence than what their own lands, in the actual ſtate of their cultivation, could afford. The inhabitants of the other muſt always enjoy a much ſmaller quantity.

This ſyſtem, however, with all its imperfections, is, perhaps, the neareſt approximation to the truth that has yet been publiſhed upon the ſubject of political œconomy, and is upon that account well

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well worth the consideration of every man who wishes to examine with attention the principles of that very important science. Though in representing the labour which is employed upon land as the only productive labour, the notions which it inculcates are perhaps too narrow and confined; yet in representing the wealth of nations as consisting, not in the unconsumable riches of money, but in the consumable goods annually reproduced by the labour of the society; and in representing perfect liberty as the only effectual expedient for rendering this annual reproduction the greatest possible, its doctrine seems to be in every respect as just as it is generous and liberal. Its followers are very numerous; and as men are fond of paradoxes, and of appearing to understand what surpasses the comprehension of ordinary people, the paradox which it maintains, concerning the unproductive nature of manufacturing labour, has not perhaps contributed a little to increase the number of its admirers. They have for some years past made a pretty considerable sect, distinguished in the French republic of letters by the name of, The Œconomists. Their works have certainly been of some service to their country; not only by bringing into general discussion, many subjects which had never been well examined before, but by influencing in some measure the public administration in favour of agriculture. It has been in consequence of their representations, accordingly, that the agriculture of France has been delivered from several of the oppressions which it

before laboured under. The term during which ſuch a leaſe can be granted, as will be valid againſt every future purchaſer or proprietor of the land, has been prolonged from nine to twenty-ſeven years. The ancient provincial reſtraints upon the tranſportation of corn from one province of the kingdom to another, have been entirely taken away, and the liberty of exporting it to all foreign countries, has been eſtabliſhed as the common law of the kingdom in all ordinary caſes. This ſect, in their works, which are very numerous, and which treat not only of what is properly called Political Œconomy, or of the nature and cauſes of the wealth of nations, but of every other branch of the ſyſtem of civil government, all follow implicitly, and without any ſenſible variation, the doctrine of Mr. Queſnai. There is upon this account little variety in the greater part of their works. The moſt diſtinct and beſt connected account of this doctrine is to be found in a little book written by Mr. Mercier de la Riviere, ſome time Intendant of Martinico, intitled, The natural and eſſential Order of Political Societies. The admiration of this whole ſect for their maſter, who was himſelf a man of the greateſt modeſty and ſimplicity, is not inferior to that of any of the ancient philoſophers for the founders of their reſpective ſyſtems. "There have been, ſince "the world began," ſays a very diligent and reſpectable author, the Marquis de Mirabeau, "three great inventions which have principally "given ſtability to political ſocieties, indepen-

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" dent of many other inventions which have " enriched and adorned them. The firſt, is the " invention of writing, which alone gives human " nature the power of tranſmitting, without " alteration, its laws, its contracts, its annals, " and its diſcoveries. The ſecond, is the in- " vention of money, which binds together all " the relations between civilized ſocieties. The " third, is the Œconomical Table, the reſult " of the other two, which completes them both " by perfecting their object; the great diſcovery " of our age, but of which our poſterity will " reap the benefit."

As the political œconomy of the nations of modern Europe, has been more favourable to manufactures and foreign trade, the induſtry of the towns, than to agriculture, the induſtry of the country; ſo that of other nations has followed a different plan, and has been more favourable to agriculture than to manufactures and foreign trade.

The policy of China favours agriculture more than all other employments. In China, the condition of a labourer is ſaid to be as much ſuperior to that of an artificer; as in moſt parts of Europe, that of an artificer is to that of a labourer. In China, the great ambition of every man is to get poſſeſſion of ſome little bit of land, either in property or in leaſe; and leaſes are there ſaid to be granted upon very moderate terms, and to be ſufficiently ſecured to the leſſees. The Chineſe have little reſpect for foreign trade. Your beggarly commerce! was the language in which

which the Mandarins of Pekin uſed to talk to Mr. De Lange, the Ruſſian envoy, concerning it*. Except with Japan, the Chineſe carry on, themſelves, and in their own bottoms, little or no foreign trade; and it is only into one or two ports of their kingdom that they even admit the ſhips of foreign nations. Foreign trade, therefore, is, in China, every way confined within a much narrower circle than that to which it would naturally extend itſelf, if more freedom was allowed to it, either in their own ſhips, or in thoſe of foreign nations.

Manufactures, as in a ſmall bulk they frequently contain a great value, and can upon that account be tranſported at leſs expence from one country to another than moſt parts of rude produce, are, in almoſt all countries, the principal ſupport of foreign trade. In countries, beſides, leſs extenſive and leſs favourably circumſtanced for interior commerce than China, they generally require the ſupport of foreign trade. Without an extenſive foreign market they could not well flouriſh, either in countries ſo moderately extenſive as to afford but a narrow home market; or in countries where the communication between one province and another was ſo difficult, as to render it impoſſible for the goods of any particular place to enjoy the whole of that home market which the country could afford. The perfection of manufacturing induſtry, it muſt be remembered, depends altogether upon the diviſion of

* See the Journal of Mr. De Lange in Bell's Travels, vol. ii. p. 258. 276. and 293.

labour;

labour; and the degree to which the diviſion of labour can be introduced into any manufacture, is neceſſarily regulated, it has already been ſhown, by the extent of the market. But the great extent of the empire of China, the vaſt multitude of its inhabitants, the variety of climate, and conſequently of productions in its different provinces, and the eaſy communication by means of water carriage between the greater part of them, render the home market of that country of ſo great extent, as to be alone ſufficient to ſupport very great manufactures, and to admit of very conſiderable ſubdiviſions of labour. The home market of China is, perhaps, in extent, not much inferior to the market of all the different countries of Europe put together. A more extenſive foreign trade, however, which to this great home market added the foreign market of all the reſt of the world; eſpecially if any conſiderable part of this trade was carried on in Chineſe ſhips; could ſcarce fail to increaſe very much the manufactures of China, and to improve very much the productive powers of its manufacturing induſtry. By a more extenſive navigation, the Chineſe would naturally learn the art of uſing and conſtructing themſelves all the different machines made uſe of in other countries, as well as the other improvements of art and induſtry which are practiſed in all the different parts of the world. Upon their preſent plan they have little opportunity of improving themſelves by the example of any other nation; except that of the Japaneſe.

The policy of ancient Egypt too, and that of the Gentoo government of Indoſtan, ſeem to have

have favoured agriculture more than all other employments.

Both in ancient Egypt and Indoſtan, the whole body of the people was divided into different caſts or tribes, each of which was confined, from father to ſon, to a particular employment or claſs of employments. The ſon of a prieſt was neceſſarily a prieſt; the ſon of a ſoldier, a ſoldier; the ſon of a labourer, a labourer; the ſon of a weaver, a weaver; the ſon of a taylor, a taylor; &c. In both countries, the caſt of the prieſts held the higheſt rank, and that of the ſoldiers the next; and in both countries, the caſt of the farmers and labourers was ſuperior to the caſts of merchants and manufacturers.

The government of both countries was particularly attentive to the intereſt of agriculture. The works conſtructed by the ancient ſovereigns of Egypt for the proper diſtribution of the waters of the Nile were famous in antiquity; and the ruined remains of ſome of them are ſtill the admiration of travellers. Thoſe of the ſame kind which were conſtructed by the ancient ſovereigns of Indoſtan, for the proper diſtribution of the waters of the Ganges as well as of many other rivers, though they have been leſs celebrated, ſeem to have been equally great. Both countries, accordingly, though ſubject occaſionally to dearths, have been famous for their great fertility. Though both were extremely populous, yet, in years of moderate plenty, they were both able to export great quantities of grain to their neighbours.

The ancient Egyptians had a ſuperſtitious averſion to the ſea; and as the Gentoo religion does not permit its followers to light a fire, nor conſequently to dreſs any victuals upon the water, it in effect prohibits them from all diſtant ſea voyages. Both the Egyptians and Indians muſt have depended almoſt altogether upon the navigation of other nations for the exportation of their ſurplus produce; and this dependency, as it muſt have confined the market, ſo it muſt have diſcouraged the increaſe of this ſurplus produce. It muſt have diſcouraged too the increaſe of the manufactured produce more than that of the rude produce. Manufactures require a much more extenſive market than the moſt important parts of the rude produce of the land. A ſingle ſhoemaker will make more than three hundred pairs of ſhoes in the year; and his own family will not perhaps wear out ſix pairs. Unleſs therefore he has the cuſtom of at leaſt fifty ſuch families as his own, he cannot diſpoſe of the whole produce of his own labour. The moſt numerous claſs of artificers will ſeldom, in a large country, make more than one in fifty or one in a hundred of the whole number of families contained in it. But in ſuch large countries as France and England, the number of people employed in agriculture has by ſome authors been computed at a half, by others at a third, and by no author that I know of, at leſs than a fifth of the whole inhabitants of the country. But as the produce of the agriculture of both France and England is, the far greater part of it, conſumed

ſumed at home, each perſon employed in it muſt, according to theſe computations, require little more than the cultom of one, two, or, at moſt, of four ſuch families as his own, in order to diſpoſe of the whole produce of his own labour. Agriculture, therefore, can ſupport itſelf under the diſcouragement of a confined market, much better than manufactures. In both ancient Egypt and Indoſtan, indeed, the confinement of the foreign market was in ſome meaſure compenſated by the conveniency of many inland navigations, which opened, in the moſt advantageous manner, the whole extent of the home market to every part of the produce of every different diſtrict of thoſe countries. The great extent of Indoſtan too rendered the home market of that country very great, and ſufficient to ſupport a great variety of manufactures. But the ſmall extent of ancient Egypt, which was never equal to England, muſt at all times have rendered the home market of that country too narrow for ſupporting any great variety of manufactures. Bengal, accordingly, the province of Indoſtan which commonly exports the greateſt quantity of rice, has always been more remarkable for the exportation of a great variety of manufactures, than for that of its grain. Ancient Egypt, on the contrary, though it exported ſome manufactures, fine linen in particular, as well as ſome other goods, was always moſt diſtinguiſhed for its great exportation of grain. It was long the granary of the Roman empire.

The ſovereigns of China, of ancient Egypt, and of the different kingdoms into which Indoſtan has at different times been divided, have always derived the whole, or by far the moſt conſiderable part, of their revenue from ſome ſort of land-tax or land-rent. This land-tax or land-rent, like the tithe in Europe, conſiſted in a certain proportion, a fifth, it is ſaid, of the produce of the land, which was either delivered in kind, or paid in money, according to a certain valuation, and which therefore varied from year to year according to all the variations of the produce. It was natural therefore, that the ſovereigns of thoſe countries ſhould be particularly attentive to the intereſts of agriculture, upon the proſperity or declenſion of which immediately depended the yearly increaſe or diminution of their own revenue.

The policy of the ancient republics of Greece, and that of Rome, though it honoured agriculture more than manufactures or foreign trade, yet ſeems rather to have diſcouraged the latter employments, than to have given any direct or intentional encouragement to the former. In ſeveral of the ancient ſtates of Greece, foreign trade was prohibited altogether; and in ſeveral others the employments of artificers and manufacturers were conſidered as hurtful to the ſtrength and agility of the human body, as rendering it incapable of thoſe habits which their military and gymnaſtic exerciſes endeavoured to form in it, and as thereby diſqualifying it more

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or leſs for undergoing the fatigues and encountering the dangers of war. Such occupations were conſidered as fit only for ſlaves, and the free citizens of the ſtate were prohibited from exerciſing them. Even in thoſe ſtates where no ſuch prohibition took place, as in Rome and Athens, the great body of the people were in effect excluded from all the trades which are now commonly exerciſed by the lower ſort of the inhabitants of towns. Such trades were, at Athens and Rome, all occupied by the ſlaves of the rich, who exerciſed them for the benefit of their maſters, whoſe wealth, power, and protection, made it almoſt impoſſible for a poor freeman to find a market for his work, when it came into competition with that of the ſlaves of the rich. Slaves, however, are very ſeldom inventive; and all the moſt important improvements, either in machinery, or in the arrangement and diſtribution of work, which facilitate and abridge labour, have been the diſcoveries of freemen. Should a ſlave propoſe any improvement of this kind, his maſter would be very apt to conſider the propoſal as the ſuggeſtion of lazineſs, and of a deſire to ſave his own labour at the maſter's expence. The poor ſlave, inſtead of reward, would probably meet with much abuſe, perhaps with ſome puniſhment. In the manufactures carried on by ſlaves, therefore, more labour muſt generally have been employed to execute the ſame quantity of work, than in thoſe carried on by freemen. The work of the former muſt, upon that account, generally have been dearer

BOOK IV.

than that of the latter. The Hungarian mines, it is remarked by Mr. Monteſquieu, though not richer, have always been wrought with leſs expence, and therefore with more profit, than the Turkiſh mines in their neighbourhood. The Turkiſh mines are wrought by ſlaves; and the arms of thoſe ſlaves are the only machines which the Turks have ever thought of employing. The Hungarian mines are wrought by freemen, who employ a great deal of machinery, by which they facilitate and abridge their own labour. From the very little that is known about the price of manufactures in the times of the Greeks and Romans, it would appear that thoſe of the finer ſort were exceſſively dear. Silk ſold for its weight in gold. It was not, indeed, in thoſe times a European manufacture; and as it was all brought from the Eaſt Indies, the diſtance of the carriage may in ſome meaſure account for the greatneſs of the price. The price, however, which a lady, it is ſaid, would ſometimes pay for a piece of very fine linen, ſeems to have been equally extravagant; and as linen was always either an European, or, at fartheſt, an Egyptian manufacture, this high price can be accounted for only by the great expence of the labour which muſt have been employed about it, and the expence of this labour again could ariſe from nothing but the awkwardneſs of the machinery which it made uſe of. The price of fine woollens too, though not quite ſo extravagant, ſeems however to have been much above that of the preſent times. Some cloths, we are told by Pliny,

Pliny, dyed in a particular manner, coſt a hundred denarii, or three pounds ſix ſhillings and eight pence the pound weight*. Others dyed in another manner coſt a thouſand denarii the pound weight, or thirty-three pounds ſix ſhillings and eight pence. The Roman pound, it muſt be remembered, contained only twelve of our avoirdupois ounces. This high price, indeed, ſeems to have been principally owing to the dye. But had not the cloths themſelves been much dearer than any which are made in the preſent times, ſo very expenſive a dye would not probably have been beſtowed upon them. The diſproportion would have been too great between the value of the acceſſory and that of the principal. The price mentioned by the ſame† author of ſome Triclinaria, a ſort of woollen pillows or cuſhions made uſe of to lean upon as they reclined upon their couches at table, paſſes all credibility; ſome of them being ſaid to have coſt more than thirty thouſand, others more than three hundred thouſand pounds. This high price too is not ſaid to have ariſen from the dye. In the dreſs of the people of faſhion of both ſexes, there ſeems to have been much leſs variety, it is obſerved by Doctor Arbuthnot, in ancient than in modern times; and the very little variety which we find in that of the ancient ſtatues confirms his obſervation. He infers from this, that their dreſs muſt upon the whole have been cheaper than ours: but the concluſion does not ſeem to follow. When the

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* Plin. l. ix. c. 39.

† Plin. l. viii. c. 48.

expence of fashionable dress is very great, the variety must be very small. But when, by the improvements in the productive powers of manufacturing art and industry, the expence of any one dress comes to be very moderate, the variety will naturally be very great. The rich not being able to distinguish themselves by the expence of any one dress, will naturally endeavour to do so by the multitude and variety of their dresses.

The greatest and most important branch of the commerce of every nation, it has already been observed, is that which is carried on between the inhabitants of the town and those of the country. The inhabitants of the town draw from the country the rude produce which constitutes both the materials of their work and the fund of their subsistence; and they pay for this rude produce by sending back to the country a certain portion of it manufactured and prepared for immediate use. The trade which is carried on between these two different sets of people, consists ultimately in a certain quantity of rude produce exchanged for a certain quantity of manufactured produce. The dearer the latter, therefore, the cheaper the former; and whatever tends in any country to raise the price of manufactured produce, tends to lower that of the rude produce of the land, and thereby to discourage agriculture. The smaller the quantity of manufactured produce which any given quantity of rude produce, or, what comes to the same thing, which the price of any given quantity of rude produce is capable of purchasing, the smaller the exchangeable value of that given quantity

quantity of rude produce; the ſmaller the encouragement which either the landlord has to increaſe its quantity by improving, or the farmer by cultivating the land. Whatever, beſides, tends to diminiſh in any country the number of artificers and manufacturers, tends to diminiſh the home market, the moſt important of all markets for the rude produce of the land, and thereby ſtill further to diſcourage agriculture.

Thoſe ſyſtems, therefore, which, preferring agriculture to all other employments, in order to promote it, impoſe reſtraints upon manufactures and foreign trade, act contrary to the very end which they propoſe, and indirectly diſcourage that very ſpecies of induſtry which they mean to promote. They are ſo far, perhaps, more inconſiſtent than even the mercantile ſyſtem. That ſyſtem, by encouraging manufactures and foreign trade more than agriculture, turns a certain portion of the capital of the ſociety from ſupporting a more advantageous, to ſupport a leſs advantageous ſpecies of induſtry. But ſtill it really and in the end encourages that ſpecies of induſtry which it means to promote. Thoſe agricultural ſyſtems, on the contrary, really and in the end diſcourage their own favourite ſpecies of induſtry.

It is thus that every ſyſtem which endeavours, either, by extraordinary encouragements, to draw towards a particular ſpecies of induſtry a greater ſhare of the capital of the ſociety than what would naturally go to it; or, by extraordinary reſtraints, to force from a particular ſpecies of induſtry ſome

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ſhare of the capital which would otherwiſe be employed in it; is in reality ſubverſive of the great purpoſe which it means to promote. It retards, inſtead of accelerating, the progreſs of the ſociety towards real wealth and greatneſs; and diminiſhes, inſtead of increaſing, the real value of the annual produce of its land and labour.

All ſyſtems either of preference or of reſtraint, therefore, being thus completely taken away, the obvious and ſimple ſyſtem of natural liberty eſtabliſhes itſelf of its own accord. Every man, as long as he does not violate the laws of juſtice, is left perfectly free to purſue his own intereſt his own way, and to bring both his induſtry and capital into competition with thoſe of any other man, or order of men. The Sovereign is completely diſcharged from a duty, in the attempting to perform which he muſt always be expoſed to innumerable deluſions, and for the proper performance of which no human wiſdom or knowledge could ever be ſufficient; the duty of ſuperintending the induſtry of private people, and of directing it towards the employments moſt ſuitable to the intereſt of the ſociety. According to the ſyſtem of natural liberty, the Sovereign has only three duties to attend to; three duties of great importance, indeed, but plain and intelligible to common underſtandings: firſt, the duty of protecting the ſociety from the violence and invaſion of other independent ſocieties; ſecondly, the duty of protecting, as far as poſſible, every member of the ſociety from the injuſtice or oppreſſion of every other member of it, or the duty of eſtabliſhing

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an exact adminiſtration of juſtice; and, thirdly, the duty of erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public inſtitutions, which it can never be for the intereſt of any individual, or ſmall number of individuals, to erect and maintain; becauſe the profit could never repay the expence to any individual or ſmall number of individuals, though it may frequently do much more than repay it to a great ſociety. CHAP. IX.

The proper performance of thoſe ſeveral duties of the ſovereign neceſſarily ſuppoſes a certain expence; and this expence again neceſſarily requires a certain revenue to ſupport it. In the following book, therefore, I ſhall endeavour to explain; firſt, what are the neceſſary expences of the Sovereign or commonwealth; and which of thoſe expences ought to be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole ſociety; and which of them, by that of ſome particular part only, or of ſome particular members of the ſociety: ſecondly, what are the different methods in which the whole ſociety may be made to contribute towards defraying the expences incumbent on the whole ſociety, and what are the principal advantages and inconveniences of each of thoſe methods: and, thirdly, what are the reaſons and cauſes which have induced almoſt all modern governments to mortgage ſome part of this revenue, or to contract debts, and what have been the effects of thoſe debts upon the real wealth, the annual produce of the land and labour of the ſociety. The following book, therefore, will naturally be divided into three chapters.

BOOK V.

OF THE REVENUE OF THE SOVEREIGN OR COMMONWEALTH.

CHAP. I.

Of the Expences of the Sovereign or Commonwealth.

PART FIRST.

Of the Expence of Defence.

BOOK V. CHAP. I.

THE firſt duty of the Sovereign, that of protecting the ſociety from the violence and invaſion of other independent ſocieties, can be performed only by means of a military force. But the expence both of preparing this military force in time of peace, and of employing it in time of war, is very different in the different ſtates of ſociety, in the different periods of improvement.

Among nations of hunters, the loweſt and rudeſt ſtate of ſociety, ſuch as we find it among the native tribes of North America, every man is a warrior as well as a hunter. When he goes to war, either to defend his ſociety, or to revenge the injuries which have been done to it by other ſocieties, he maintains himſelf by his own labour, in

in the ſame manner as when he lives at home. His ſociety, for in this ſtate of things there is properly neither ſovereign nor commonwealth, is at no ſort of expence, either to prepare him for the field, or to maintain him while he is in it.

Among nations of ſhepherds, a more advanced ſtate of ſociety, ſuch as we find it among the Tartars and Arabs, every man is, in the ſame manner, a warrior. Such nations have commonly no fixed habitation, but live, either in tents, or in a ſort of covered waggons which are eaſily tranſported from place to place. The whole tribe or nation changes its ſituation according to the different ſeaſons of the year, as well as according to other accidents. When its herds and flocks have conſumed the forage of one part of the country, it removes to another, and from that to a third. In the dry ſeaſon, it comes down to the banks of the rivers; in the wet ſeaſon it retires to the upper country. When ſuch a nation goes to war, the warriors will not truſt their herds and flocks to the feeble defence of their old men, their women and children, and their old men, their women and children, will not be left behind without defence and without ſubſiſtence. The whole nation, beſides, being accuſtomed to a wandering life, even in time of peace, eaſily takes the field in time of war. Whether it marches as an army, or moves about as a company of herdſmen, the way of life is nearly the ſame, though the object propoſed by it be very different. They all go to war together, therefore, and every one does as well as he

he can. Among the Tartars, even the women have been frequently known to engage in battle. If they conquer, whatever belongs to the hoſtile tribe is the recompence of the victory. But if they are vanquiſhed, all is loſt, and not only their herds and flocks, but their women and children, become the booty of the conqueror. Even the greater part of thoſe who ſurvive the action are obliged to ſubmit to him for the ſake of immediate ſubſiſtence. The reſt are commonly diſſipated and diſperſed in the deſart.

The ordinary life, the ordinary exerciſes of a Tartar or Arab, prepare him ſufficiently for war. Running, wreſtling, cudgel-playing, throwing the javelin, drawing the bow, &c. are the common paſtimes of thoſe who live in the open air, and are all of them the images of war. When a Tartar or Arab actually goes to war, he is maintained, by his own herds and flocks which he carries with him, in the ſame manner as in peace. His chief or ſovereign, for thoſe nations have all chiefs or ſovereigns, is at no ſort of expence in preparing him for the field; and when he is in it, the chance of plunder is the only pay which he either expects or requires.

An army of hunters can ſeldom exceed two or three hundred men. The precarious ſubſiſtence which the chace affords could ſeldom allow a greater number to keep together for any conſiderable time. An army of ſhepherds, on the contrary, may ſometimes amount to two or three hundred thouſand. As long as nothing ſtops their progreſs, as long as they can go on from one

one diſtrict, of which they have conſumed the forage, to another which is yet entire; there ſeems to be ſcarce any limit to the number who can march on together. A nation of hunters can never be formidable to the civilized nations in their neighbourhood. A nation of ſhepherds may. Nothing can be more contemptible than an Indian war in North America. Nothing, on the contrary, can be more dreadful than a Tartar invaſion has frequently been in Aſia. The judgment of Thucydides, that both Europe and Aſia could not reſiſt the Scythians united, has been verified by the experience of all ages. The inhabitants of the extenſive, but defenceleſs plains of Scythia or Tartary, have been frequently united under the dominion of the chief of ſome conquering horde or clan; and the havoc and devaſtation of Aſia have always ſignalized their union. The inhabitants of the inhoſpitable deſarts of Arabia, the other great nation of ſhepherds, have never been united but once; under Mahomet and his immediate ſucceſſors. Their union, which was more the effect of religious enthuſiaſm than of conqueſt, was ſignalized in the ſame manner. If the hunting nations of America ſhould ever become ſhepherds, their neighbourhood would be much more dangerous to the European colonies than it is at preſent.

In a yet more advanced ſtate of ſociety, among thoſe nations of huſbandmen who have little foreign commerce, and no other manufactures but thoſe coarſe and houſhold ones which almoſt

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every private family prepares for its own uſe; every man, in the ſame manner, either is a warrior, or eaſily becomes ſuch. They who live by agriculture generally paſs the whole day in the open air, expoſed to all the inclemencies of the ſeaſons. The hardineſs of their ordinary life prepares them for the fatigues of war, to ſome of which their neceſſary occupations bear a great analogy. The neceſſary occupation of a ditcher prepares him to work in the trenches, and to fortify a camp as well as to encloſe a field. The ordinary paſtimes of ſuch huſbandmen are the ſame as thoſe of ſhepherds, and are in the ſame manner the images of war. But as huſbandmen have leſs leiſure than ſhepherds, they are not ſo frequently employed in thoſe paſtimes. They are ſoldiers, but ſoldiers not quite ſo much maſters of their excerciſe. Such as they are, however, it ſeldom coſts the ſovereign or commonwealth any expence to prepare them for the field.

Agriculture, even in its rudeſt and loweſt ſtate, ſuppoſes a ſettlement; ſome ſort of fixed habitation which cannot be abandoned without great loſs. When a nation of mere huſbandmen, therefore, goes to war, the whole people cannot take the field together. The old men, the women and children, at leaſt, muſt remain at home to take care of the habitation. All the men of the military age, however, may take the field, and, in ſmall nations of this kind, have frequently done ſo. In every nation the men of the military age are ſuppoſed to amount to about a fourth or a fifth part of the whole body of the

people. If the campaign too ſhould begin after ſeed-time, and end before harveſt, both the huſbandman and his principal labourers can be ſpared from the farm without much loſs. He truſts that the work which muſt be done in the mean time can be well enough executed by the old men, the women and the children. He is not unwilling, therefore, to ſerve without pay during a ſhort campaign, and it frequently coſts the ſovereign or commonwealth as little to maintain him in the field as to prepare him for it. The citizens of all the different ſtates of ancient Greece ſeem to have ſerved in this manner till after the ſecond Perſian war; and the people of Peloponneſus till after the Peloponneſian war. The Peloponneſians, Thucydides obſerves, generally left the field in the ſummer, and returned home to reap the harveſt. The Roman people under their kings, and during the firſt ages of the republic, ſerved in the ſame manner. It was not till the ſiege of Veii, that they, who ſtaid at home, began to contribute ſomething towards maintaining thoſe who went to war. In the European monarchies, which were founded upon the ruins of the Roman empire, both before and for ſome time after the eſtabliſhment of what is properly called the feudal law, the great lords, with all their immediate dependents, uſed to ſerve the crown at their own expence. In the field, in the ſame manner as at home, they maintained themſelves by their own revenue, and not by any ſtipend or pay which they received from the king upon that particular occaſion.

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In a more advanced ſtate of ſociety, two different cauſes contribute to render it altogether impoſſible that they, who take the field, ſhould maintain themſelves at their own expence. Thoſe two cauſes are, the progreſs of manufactures, and the improvement in the art of war.

Though a huſbandman ſhould be employed in an expedition, provided it begins after ſeed-time and ends before harveſt, the interruption of his buſineſs will not always occaſion any conſiderable diminution of his revenue. Without the intervention of his labour, nature does herſelf the greater part of the work which remains to be done. But the moment that an artificer, a ſmith, a carpenter, or a weaver, for example, quits his workhouſe, the ſole ſource of his revenue is completely dried up. Nature does nothing for him, he does all for himſelf. When he takes the field, therefore, in defence of the public, as he has no revenue to maintain himſelf, he muſt neceſſarily be maintained by the public. But in a country of which a great part of the inhabitants are artificers and manufacturers, a great part of the people who go to war muſt be drawn from thoſe claſſes, and muſt therefore be maintained by the public as long as they are employed in its ſervice.

When the art of war too has gradually grown up to be a very intricate and complicated ſcience, when the event of war ceaſes to be determined, as in the firſt ages of ſociety, by a ſingle irregular ſkirmiſh or battle, but when the conteſt is generally ſpun out through ſeveral different campaigns,

paigns, each of which lafts during the greater part of the year; it becomes univerfally neceffary that the public fhould maintain thofe who ferve the public in war, at leaft while they are employed in that fervice. Whatever in time of peace might be the ordinary occupation of thofe who go to war, fo very tedious and expenfive a fervice would otherwife be by far too heavy a burden upon them. After the fecond Perfian war, accordingly, the armies of Athens feem to have been generally compofed of mercenary troops; confifting, indeed, partly of citizens, but partly too of foreigners; and all of them equally hired and paid at the expence of the ftate. From the time of the fiege of Veii, the armies of Rome received pay for their fervice during the time which they remained in the field. Under the feudal governments the military fervice both of the great lords and of their immediate dependents was, after a certain period, univerfally exchanged for a payment in money, which was employed to maintain thofe who ferved in their ftead.

The number of thofe who can go to war, in proportion to the whole number of the people, is neceffarily much fmaller in a civilized, than in a rude ftate of fociety. In a civilized fociety, as the foldiers are maintained altogether by the labour of thofe who are not foldiers, the number of the former can never exceed what the latter can maintain, over and above maintaining, in a manner fuitable to their refpective ftations, both themfelves and the other officers of government,

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and law, whom they are obliged to maintain. In the little agrarian ſtates of ancient Greece, a fourth or a fifth part of the whole body of the people conſidered themſelves as ſoldiers, and would ſometimes, it is ſaid, take the field. Among the civilized nations of modern Europe, it is commonly computed, that not more than one hundredth part of the inhabitants of any country can be employed as ſoldiers, without ruin to the country which pays the expence of their ſervice.

The expence of preparing the army for the field ſeems not to have become conſiderable in any nation, till long after that of maintaining it in the field had devolved entirely upon the ſovereign or commonwealth. In all the different republics of ancient Greece, to learn his military exerciſes, was a neceſſary part of education impoſed by the ſtate upon every free citizen. In every city there ſeems to have been a public field, in which, under the protection of the public magiſtrate, the young people were taught their different exerciſes by different maſters. In this very ſimple inſtitution, conſiſted the whole expence which any Grecian ſtate ſeems ever to have been at, in preparing its citizens for war. In ancient Rome the exerciſes of the Campus Martius anſwered the ſame purpoſe with thoſe of the Gymnaſium in ancient Greece. Under the feudal governments, the many public ordinances that the citizens of every diſtrict ſhould practiſe archery as well as ſeveral other military exerciſes, were intended for promoting the ſame purpoſe, but do not ſeem to have promoted it ſo well.

well. Either from want of intereſt in the officers entruſted with the execution of thoſe ordinances, or from ſome other cauſe, they appear to have been univerſally neglected; and in the progreſs of all thoſe governments, military exerciſes ſeem to have gone gradually into diſuſe among the great body of the people.

In the republics of ancient Greece and Rome, during the whole period of their exiſtence, and under the feudal governments for a conſiderable time after their firſt eſtabliſhment, the trade of a ſoldier was not a ſeparate, diſtinct trade, which conſtituted the ſole or principal occupation of a particular claſs of citizens. Every ſubject of the ſtate, whatever might be the ordinary trade or occupation by which he gained his livelihood, conſidered himſelf, upon all ordinary occaſions, as fit likewiſe to exerciſe the trade of a ſoldier, and upon many extraordinary occaſions as bound to exerciſe it.

The art of war, however, as it is certainly the nobleſt of all arts, ſo in the progreſs of improvement it neceſſarily becomes one of the moſt complicated among them. The ſtate of the mechanical, as well as of ſome other arts, with which it is neceſſarily connected, determines the degree of perfection to which it is capable of being carried at any particular time. But in order to carry it to this degree of perfection, it is neceſſary that it ſhould become the ſole or principal occupation of a particular claſs of citizens, and the diviſion of labour is as neceſſary for the improvement of this, as of every other art. Into

other arts the diviſion of labour is naturally introduced by the prudence of individuals, who find that they promote their private intereſt better by confining themſelves to a particular trade, than by exerciſing a great number. But it is the wiſdom of the ſtate only which can render the trade of a ſoldier a particular trade, ſeparate and diſtinct from all others. A private citizen who, in time of profound peace, and without any particular encouragement from the public, ſhould ſpend the greater part of his time in military exerciſes, might, no doubt, both improve himſelf very much in them, and amuſe himſelf very well; but he certainly would not promote his own intereſt. It is the wiſdom of the ſtate only which can render it for his intereſt to give up the greater part of his time to this peculiar occupation: and ſtates have not always had this wiſdom, even when their circumſtances had become ſuch, that the preſervation of their exiſtence required that they ſhould have it.

A ſhepherd has a great deal of leiſure; a huſbandman, in the rude ſtate of huſbandry, has ſome; an artificer or manufacturer has none at all. The firſt may, without any loſs, employ a great deal of his time in martial exerciſes; the ſecond may employ ſome part of it; but the laſt cannot employ a ſingle hour in them without ſome loſs, and his attention to his own intereſt naturally leads him to neglect them altogether. Thoſe improvements in huſbandry too, which the progreſs of arts and manufactures neceſſarily introduces, leave the huſbandman as little leiſure

as the artificer. Military exercises come to be as much neglected by the inhabitants of the country as by those of the town, and the great body of the people becomes altogether unwarlike. That wealth, at the same time, which always follows, the improvements of agriculture and manufactures, and which in reality is no more than the accumulated produce of those improvements, provokes the invasion of all their neighbours. An industrious, and upon that account a wealthy nation, is of all nations the most likely to be attacked; and unless the state take some new measures for the public defence, the natural habits of the people render them altogether incapable of defending themselves.

In these circumstances, there seem to be but two methods, by which the state can make any tolerable provision for the public defence.

It may either, first, by means of a very rigorous police, and in spite of the whole bent of the interest, genius and inclinations of the people, enforce the practice of military exercises, and oblige either all the citizens of the military age, or a certain number of them, to join in some measure the trade of a soldier to whatever other trade or profession they may happen to carry on.

Or, secondly, by maintaining and employing a certain number of citizens in the constant practice of military exercises, it may render the trade of a soldier a particular trade, separate and distinct from all others.

If the state has recourse to the first of those two expedients, its military force is said to consist

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fiſt in a militia; if to the ſecond, it is ſaid to conſiſt in a ſtanding army. The practice of military exerciſes is the ſole or principal occupation of the ſoldiers of a ſtanding army, and the maintenance or pay which the ſtate affords them is the principal and ordinary fund of their ſubſiſtence. The practice of military exerciſes is only the occaſional occupation of the ſoldiers of a militia, and they derive the principal and ordinary fund of their ſubſiſtence from ſome other occupation. In a militia, the character of the labourer, artificer, or tradeſman, predominates over that of the ſoldier: in a ſtanding army, that of the ſoldier predominates over every other character; and in this diſtinction ſeems to conſiſt the eſſential difference between thoſe two different ſpecies of military force.

Militias have been of ſeveral different kinds. In ſome countries the citizens deſtined for defending the ſtate, ſeem to have been exerciſed only, without being, if I may ſay ſo, regimented; that is, without being divided into ſeparate and diſtinct bodies of troops, each of which performed its exerciſes under its own proper and permanent officers. In the republics of ancient Greece and Rome, each citizen, as long as he remained at home, ſeems to have practiſed his exerciſes either ſeparately and independently, or with ſuch of his equals as he liked beſt; and not to have been attached to any particular body of troops till he was actually called upon to take the field. In other countries, the militia has not only been exerciſed, but regimented. In England,

land, in Switzerland, and, I believe, in every other country of modern Europe, where any imperfect military force of this kind has been eſtabliſhed, every militia-man is, even in time of peace, attached to a particular body of troops, which performs its exerciſes under its own proper and permanent officers.

Before the invention of fire-arms, that army was ſuperior in which the ſoldiers had, each individually, the greateſt ſkill and dexterity in the uſe of their arms. Strength and agility of body were of the higheſt conſequence, and commonly determined the fate of battles. But this ſkill and dexterity in the uſe of their arms, could be acquired only, in the ſame manner as fencing is at preſent, by practiſing, not in great bodies, but each man ſeparately, in a particular ſchool, under a particular maſter, or with his own particular equals and companions. Since the invention of fire-arms, ſtrength and agility of body, or even extraordinary dexterity and ſkill in the uſe of arms, though they are far from being of no conſequence, are, however, of leſs conſequence. The nature of the weapon, though it by no means puts the awkward upon a level with the ſkilful, puts him more nearly ſo than he ever was before. All the dexterity and ſkill, it is ſuppoſed, which are neceſſary for uſing it, can be well enough acquired by practiſing in great bodies.

Regularity, order, and prompt obedience to command, are qualities which, in modern armies, are of more importance towards determining the fate

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fate of battles, than the dexterity and ſkill of the ſoldiers in the uſe of their arms. But the noiſe of fire-arms, the ſmoke, and the inviſible death to which every man feels himſelf every moment expoſed, as ſoon as he comes within cannon-ſhot, and frequently a long time before the battle can be well ſaid to be engaged, muſt render it very difficult to maintain any conſiderable degree of this regularity, order and prompt obedience, even in the beginning of a modern battle. In an ancient battle there was no noiſe but what aroſe from the human voice; there was no ſmoke, there was no inviſible cauſe of wounds or death. Every man, till ſome mortal weapon actually did approach him, ſaw clearly that no ſuch weapon was near him. In theſe circumſtances, and among troops who had ſome confidence in their own ſkill and dexterity in the uſe of their arms, it muſt have been a good deal leſs difficult to preſerve ſome degree of regularity and order, not only in the beginning, but through the whole progreſs of an ancient battle, and till one of the two armies was fairly defeated. But the habits of regularity, order, and prompt obedience to command, can be acquired only by troops which are exerciſed in great bodies.

A militia, however, in whatever manner it may be either diſciplined or exerciſed, muſt always be much inferior to a well-diſciplined and well-exerciſed ſtanding army.

The ſoldiers, who are exerciſed only once a week, or once a month, can never be ſo expert in the uſe of their arms, as thoſe who are exerciſed

ciſed every day, or every other day; and though this circumſtance may not be of ſo much conſequence in modern, as it was in ancient times, yet the acknowledged ſuperiority of the Pruſſian troops, owing, it is ſaid, very much to their ſuperior expertneſs in their exerciſe, may ſatisfy us that it is, even at this day, of very conſiderable conſequence.

The ſoldiers, who are bound to obey their officer only once a week or once a month, and who are at all other times at liberty to manage their own affairs their own way, without being in any reſpect accountable to him, can never be under the ſame awe in his preſence, can never have the ſame diſpoſition to ready obedience, with thoſe whoſe whole life and conduct are every day directed by him, and who every day even riſe and go to bed, or at leaſt retire to their quarters, according to his orders. In what is called diſcipline, or in the habit of ready obedience, a militia muſt always be ſtill more inferior to a ſtanding army, than it may ſometimes be in what is called the manual exerciſe, or in the management and uſe of its arms. But in modern war the habit of ready and inſtant obedience is of much greater conſequence than a conſiderable ſuperiority in the management of arms.

Thoſe militias which, like the Tartar or Arab militia, go to war under the ſame chieftains whom they are accuſtomed to obey in peace, are by far the beſt. In reſpect for their officers, in the habit of ready obedience, they approach neareſt to ſtanding armies. The Highland militia, when

it

it ſerved under its own chieftains, had ſome advantage of the ſame kind. As the Highlanders, however, were not wandering, but ſtationary ſhepherds, as they had all a fixed habitation, and were not, in peaceable times, accuſtomed to follow their chieftain from place to place; ſo in time of war they were leſs willing to follow him to any conſiderable diſtance, or to continue for any long time in the field. When they had acquired any booty they were eager to return home, and his authority was ſeldom ſufficient to detain them. In point of obedience they were always much inferior to what is reported of the Tartars and Arabs. As the Highlanders too, from their ſtationary life, ſpend leſs of their time in the open air, they were always leſs accuſtomed to military exerciſes, and were leſs expert in the uſe of their arms than the Tartars and Arabs are ſaid to be.

A militia of any kind, it muſt be obſerved, however, which has ſerved for ſeveral ſucceſſive campaigns in the field, becomes in every reſpect a ſtanding army. The ſoldiers are every day exerciſed in the uſe of their arms, and, being conſtantly under the command of their officers, are habituated to the ſame prompt obedience which takes place in ſtanding armies. What they were before they took the field, is of little importance. They neceſſarily become in every reſpect a ſtanding army, after they have paſſed a few campaigns in it. Should the war in America drag out through another campaign, the American militia may become in every reſpect a match for that ſtanding army, of which the valour appeared,

peared, in the laſt war, at leaſt not inferior to that of the hardieſt veterans of France and Spain. CHAP. I.

This diſtinction being well underſtood, the hiſtory of all ages, it will be found, bears teſtimony to the irreſiſtible ſuperiority which a well-regulated ſtanding army has over a militia.

One of the firſt ſtanding armies of which we have any diſtinct account, in any well authenticated hiſtory, is that of Philip of Macedon. His frequent wars with the Thracians, Illyrians, Theſſalians, and ſome of the Greek cities in the neighbourhood of Macedon, gradually formed his troops, which in the beginning were probably militia, to the exact diſcipline of a ſtanding army. When he was at peace, which he was very ſeldom, and never for any long time together, he was careful not to diſband that army. It vanquiſhed and ſubdued, after a long and violent ſtruggle, indeed, the gallant and well exerciſed militias of the principal republics of ancient Greece; and afterwards, with very little ſtruggle, the effeminate and ill-exerciſed militia of the great Perſian empire. The fall of the Greek republics and of the Perſian empire, was the effect of the irreſiſtible ſuperiority which a ſtanding army has over every ſort of militia. It is the firſt great revolution in the affairs of mankind, of which hiſtory has preſerved any diſtinct or circumſtantial account.

The fall of Carthage, and the conſequent elevation of Rome, is the ſecond. All the varieties in the fortune of thoſe two famous republics may very well be accounted for from the ſame cauſe.

From

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From the end of the firſt to the beginning of the ſecond Carthaginian war, the armies of Carthage were continually in the field, and employed under three great generals, who ſucceeded one another in the command; Amilcar, his ſon-in-law Aſdrubal, and his ſon Annibal; firſt in chaſtiſing their own rebellious ſlaves, afterwards in ſubduing the revolted nations of Africa, and, laſtly, in conquering the great kingdom of Spain. The army which Annibal led from Spain into Italy muſt neceſſarily, in thoſe different wars, have been gradually formed to the exact diſcipline of a ſtanding army. The Romans, in the mean time, though they had not been altogether at peace, yet they had not, during this period, been engaged in any war of very great conſequence; and their military diſcipline, it is generally ſaid, was a good deal relaxed. The Roman armies which Annibal encountered at Trebia, Thraſymenus and Cannæ, were militia oppoſed to a ſtanding army. This circumſtance, it is probable, contributed more than any other to determine the fate of thoſe battles.

The ſtanding army which Annibal left behind him in Spain, had the like ſuperiority over the militia which the Romans ſent to oppoſe it, and in a few years, under the command of his brother, the younger Aſdrubal, expelled them almoſt entirely from that country.

Annibal was ill ſupplied from home. The Roman militia, being continually in the field, became in the progreſs of the war a well diſciplined and well exerciſed ſtanding army; and the ſuperiority of Annibal grew every day leſs and

leſs. Aſdrubal judged it neceſſary to lead the whole, or almoſt the whole of the ſtanding army which he commanded in Spain, to the aſſiſtance of his brother in Italy. In this march he is ſaid to have been miſled by his guides; and in a country which he did not know, was ſurpriſed and attacked by another ſtanding army, in every reſpect equal or ſuperior to his own, and was entirely defeated.

When Aſdrubal had left Spain, the great Scipio found nothing to oppoſe him but a militia inferior to his own. He conquered and ſubdued that militia, and, in the courſe of the war, his own militia neceſſarily became a well-diſciplined and well-exerciſed ſtanding army. That ſtanding army was afterwards carried to Africa, where it found nothing but a militia to oppoſe it. In order to defend Carthage it became neceſſary to recall the ſtanding army of Annibal. The diſheartened and frequently defeated African militia joined it, and, at the battle of Zama, compoſed the greater part of the troops of Annibal. The event of that day determined the fate of the two rival republics.

From the end of the ſecond Carthaginian war till the fall of the Roman republic, the armies of Rome were in every reſpect ſtanding armies. The ſtanding army of Macedon made ſome reſiſtance to their arms. In the height of their grandeur, it coſt them two great wars, and three great battles, to ſubdue that little kingdom; of which the conqueſt would probably have been ſtill more difficult, had it not been for the cowardice of its laſt king. The militias of all the civilized

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civilized nations of the ancient world, of Greece, of Syria, and of Egypt, made but a feeble reſiſtance to the ſtanding armies of Rome. The militias of ſome barbarous nations defended themſelves much better. The Scythian or Tartar militia, which Mithridates drew from the countries north of the Euxine and Caſpian ſeas, were the moſt formidable enemies whom the Romans had to encounter after the ſecond Carthaginian war. The Parthian and German militias too were always reſpectable, and, upon ſeveral occaſions, gained very conſiderable advantages over the Roman armies. In general, however, and when the Roman armies were well commanded, they appear to have been very much ſuperior; and if the Romans did not purſue the final conqueſt either of Parthia or Germany, it was probably becauſe they judged, that it was not worth while to add thoſe two barbarous countries to an empire which was already too large. The ancient Parthians appear to have been a nation of Scythian or Tartar extraction, and to have always retained a good deal of the manners of their anceſtors. The ancient Germans were, like the Scythians or Tartars, a nation of wandering ſhepherds, who went to war under the ſame chiefs whom they were accuſtomed to follow in peace. Their militia was exactly of the ſame kind with that of the Scythians or Tartars, from whom too they were probably deſcended.

Many different cauſes contributed to relax the diſcipline of the Roman armies. Its extreme ſeverity was, perhaps, one of thoſe cauſes. In

the days of their grandeur, when no enemy appeared capable of oppoſing them, their heavy armour was laid aſide as unneceſſarily burdenſome, their laborious exerciſes were neglected as unneceſſarily toilſome. Under the Roman emperors beſides, the ſtanding armies of Rome, thoſe particularly which guarded the German and Pannonian frontiers, became dangerous to their maſters, againſt whom they uſed frequently to ſet up their own generals. In order to render them leſs formidable, according to ſome authors, Diocleſian, according to others, Conſtantine, firſt withdrew them from the frontier, where they had always before been encamped in great bodies, generally of two or three legions each, and diſperſed them in ſmall bodies through the different provincial towns, from whence they were ſcarce ever removed, but when it became neceſſary to repel an invaſion. Small bodies of ſoldiers quartered in trading and manufacturing towns, and ſeldom removed from thoſe quarters, became themſelves tradeſmen, artificers, and manufacturers. The civil came to predominate over the military character; and the ſtanding armies of Rome gradually degenerated into a corrupt, neglected, and undiſciplined militia, incapable of reſiſting the attack of the German and Scythian militias, which ſoon afterwards invaded the weſtern empire. It was only by hiring the militia of ſome of thoſe nations to oppoſe to that of others, that the emperors were for ſome time able to defend themſelves. The fall of the weſtern empire is the third great revolution in the affairs of

mankind, of which ancient hiſtory has preſerved any diſtinct or circumſtantial account. It was brought about by the irreſiſtible ſuperiority which the militia of a barbarous, has over that of a civilized nation; which the militia of a nation of ſhepherds, has over that of a nation of huſbandmen, artificers, and manufacturers. The victories which have been gained by militias have generally been, not over ſtanding armies, but over other militias in exerciſe and diſcipline inferior to themſelves. Such were the victories which the Greek militia gained over that of the Perſian empire; and ſuch too were thoſe which in later times the Swiſs militia gained over that of the Auſtrians and Burgundians.

The military force of the German and Scythian nations who eſtabliſhed themſelves upon the ruins of the weſtern empire, continued for ſome time to be of the ſame kind in their new ſettlements, as it had been in their original country. It was a militia of ſhepherds and huſbandmen, which, in time of war, took the field under the command of the ſame chieftains whom it was accuſtomed to obey in peace. It was, therefore, tolerably well exerciſed, and tolerably well diſciplined. As arts and induſtry advanced, however, the authority of the chieftains gradually decayed, and the great body of the people had leſs time to ſpare for military exerciſes. Both the diſcipline and the exerciſe of the feudal militia, therefore, went gradually to ruin, and ſtanding armies were gradually introduced to ſupply the place of it. When the expedient of a ſtanding army, beſides,

had once been adopted by one civilized nation, it became neceſſary that all its neighbours ſhould follow the example. They ſoon found that their ſafety depended upon their doing ſo, and that their own militia was altogether incapable of reſiſting the attack of ſuch an army.

The ſoldiers of a ſtanding army, though they may never have ſeen an enemy, yet have frequently appeared to poſſeſs all the courage of veteran troops, and the very moment that they took the field to have been fit to face the hardieſt and moſt experienced veterans. In 1756, when the Ruſſian army marched into Poland, the valour of the Ruſſian ſoldiers did not appear inferior to that of the Pruſſians, at that time ſuppoſed to be the hardieſt and moſt experienced veterans in Europe. The Ruſſian empire, however, had enjoyed a profound peace for near twenty years before, and could at that time have very few ſoldiers who had ever ſeen an enemy. When the Spaniſh war broke out in 1739, England had enjoyed a profound peace for about eight and twenty years. The valour of her ſoldiers, however, far from being corrupted by that long peace, was never more diſtinguiſhed than in the attempt upon Carthagena, the firſt unfortunate exploit of that unfortunate war. In a long peace the generals, perhaps, may ſometimes forget their ſkill; but, where a well-regulated ſtanding army has been kept up, the ſoldiers ſeem never to forget their valour.

When a civilized nation depends for its defence upon a militia, it is at all times expoſed to

be conquered by any barbarous nation which happens to be in its neighbourhood. The frequent conquefts of all the civilized countries in Afia by the Tartars, fufficiently demonftrates the natural fuperiority, which the militia of a barbarous, has over that of a civilized nation. A well-regulated ftanding army is fuperior to every militia. Such an army, as it can beft be maintained by an opulent and civilized nation, fo it can alone defend fuch a nation againft the invafion of a poor and barbarous neighbour. It is only by means of a ftanding army, therefore, that the civilization of any country can be perpetuated, or even preferved for any confiderable time.

As it is only by means of a well-regulated ftanding army that a civilized country can be defended; fo it is only by means of it, that a barbarous country can be fuddenly and tolerably civilized. A ftanding army eftablifhes, with an irrefiftible force, the law of the fovereign through the remoteft provinces of the empire, and maintains fome degree of regular government in countries which could not otherwife admit of any. Whoever examines, with attention, the improvements which Peter the Great introduced into the Ruffian empire, will find that they almoft all refolve themfelves into the eftablifhment of a well-regulated ftanding army. It is the inftrument which executes and maintains all his other regulations. That degree of order and internal peace, which that empire has ever fince enjoyed, is altogether owing to the influence of that army.

Men

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Men of republican principles have been jealous of a ſtanding army as dangerous to liberty. It certainly is ſo, wherever the intereſt of the general and that of the principal officers are not neceſſarily connected with the ſupport of the conſtitution of the ſtate. The ſtanding army of Cæſar deſtroyed the Roman republic. The ſtanding army of Cromwel turned the long parliament out of doors. But where the ſovereign is himſelf the general, and the principal nobility and gentry of the country the chief officers of the army; where the military force is placed under the command of thoſe who have the greateſt intereſt in the ſupport of the civil authority, becauſe they have themſelves the greateſt ſhare of that authority, a ſtanding army can never be dangerous to liberty. On the contrary, it may in ſome caſes be favourable to liberty. The ſecurity which it gives to the ſovereign renders unneceſſary that troubleſome jealouſy, which, in ſome modern republics, ſeems to watch over the minuteſt actions, and to be at all times ready to diſturb the peace of every citizen. Where the ſecurity of the magiſtrate, though ſupported by the principal people of the country, is endangered by every popular diſcontent; where a ſmall tumult is capable of bringing about in a few hours a great revolution, the whole authority of government muſt be employed to ſuppreſs and puniſh every murmur and complaint againſt it. To a ſovereign, on the contrary, who feels himſelf ſupported, not only by the natural ariſtocracy of the country, but by a well-

regulated ſtanding army, the rudeſt, the moſt groundleſs, and the moſt licentious remonſtrances can give little diſturbance. He can ſafely pardon or neglect them, and his conſciouſneſs of his own ſuperiority naturally diſpoſes him to do ſo. That degree of liberty which approaches to licentiouſneſs can be tolerated only in countries where the ſovereign is ſecured by a well regulated ſtanding army. It is in ſuch countries only, that the public ſafety does not require, that the ſovereign ſhould be truſted with any diſcretionary power, for ſuppreſſing even the impertinent wantonneſs of this licentious liberty.

The firſt duty of the ſovereign, therefore, that of defending the ſociety from the violence and injuſtice of other independent ſocieties, grows gradually more and more expenſive, as the ſociety advances in civilization. The military force of the ſociety, which originally coſt the ſovereign no expence either in time of peace or in time of war, muſt, in the progreſs of improvement, firſt be maintained by him in time of war, and afterwards even in time of peace.

The great change introduced into the art of war by the invention of fire-arms, has enhanced ſtill further both the expence of exerciſing and diſciplining any particular number of ſoldiers in time of peace, and that of employing them in time of war. Both their arms and their ammunition are become more expenſive. A muſquet is a more expenſive machine than a javelin or a bow and arrows; a cannon or a mortar, than a baliſta or a catapulta. The powder, which is

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ſpent in a modern review, is loſt irrecoverably, and occaſions a very conſiderable expence. The javelins and arrows which were thrown or ſhot in an ancient one, could eaſily be picked up again, and were beſides of very little value. The cannon and the mortar are, not only much dearer, but much heavier machines than the baliſta or catapulta, and require a greater expence, not only to prepare them for the field, but to carry them to it. As the ſuperiority of the modern artillery, too, over that of the ancients is very great; it has become much more difficult, and conſequently much more expenſive, to fortify a town ſo as to reſiſt, even for a few weeks, the attack of that ſuperior artillery. In modern times many different cauſes contribute to render the defence of the ſociety more expenſive. The unavoidable effects of the natural progreſs of improvement have, in this reſpect, been a good deal enhanced by a great revolution in the art of war, to which a mere accident, the invention of gun-powder, ſeems to have given occaſion.

In modern war the great expence of fire-arms gives an evident advantage to the nation which can beſt afford that expence; and conſequently, to an opulent and civilized, over a poor and barbarous nation. In ancient times the opulent and civilized found it difficult to defend themſelves againſt the poor and barbarous nations. In modern times the poor and barbarous find it difficult to defend themſelves againſt the opulent and civilized. The invention of fire-arms, an inven-

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tion which at firſt ſight appears to be ſo pernicious, is certainly favourable both to the permanency and to the extenſion of civilization.

PART SECOND.

Of the Expence of Juſtice.

THE ſecond duty of the Sovereign, that of protecting, as far as poſſible, every member of the ſociety from the injuſtice or oppreſſion of every other member of it, or the duty of eſtabliſhing an exact adminiſtration of juſtice, requires too very different degrees of expence in the different periods of ſociety.

Among nations of hunters, as there is ſcarce any property, or at leaſt none that exceeds the value of two or three days labour; ſo there is ſeldom any eſtabliſhed magiſtrate or any regular adminiſtration of juſtice. Men who have no property can injure one another only in their perſons or reputations. But when one man kills, wounds, beats, or defames another, though he to whom the injury is done ſuffers, he who does it receives no benefit. It is otherwiſe with the injuries to property. The benefit of the perſon who does the injury is often equal to the loſs of him who ſuffers it. Envy, malice, or reſentment, are the only paſſions which can prompt one man to injure another in his perſon or reputation. But the greater part of men are not very frequently under the influence of thoſe paſſions; and

and the very worſt men are ſo only occaſionally. As their gratification too, how agreeable ſoever it may be to certain characters, is not attended with any real or permanent advantage, it is in the greater part of men commonly reſtrained by prudential conſiderations. Men may live together in ſociety with ſome tolerable degree of ſecurity, though there is no civil magiſtrate to protect them from the injuſtice of thoſe paſſions. But avarice and ambition in the rich, in the poor the hatred of labour and the love of preſent eaſe and enjoyment, are the paſſions which prompt to invade property, paſſions much more ſteady in their operation, and much more univerſal in their influence. Wherever there is great property, there is great inequality. For one very rich man, there muſt be at leaſt five hundred poor, and the affluence of the few ſuppoſes the indigence of the many. The affluence of the rich excites the indignation of the poor, who are often both driven by want, and prompted by envy, to invade his poſſeſſions. It is only under the ſhelter of the civil magiſtrate that the owner of that valuable property, which is acquired by the labour of many years, or perhaps of many ſucceſſive generations, can ſleep a ſingle night in ſecurity. He is at all times ſurrounded by unknown enemies, whom, though he never provoked, he can never appeaſe, and from whoſe injuſtice he can be protected only by the powerful arm of the civil magiſtrate continually held up to chaſtiſe it. The acquiſition of valuable and extenſive property, therefore, neceſſarily

requires the eſtabliſhment of civil government. Where there is no property, or at leaſt none that exceeds the value of two or three days labour, civil government is not ſo neceſſary.

Civil government ſuppoſes a certain ſubordination. But as the neceſſity of civil government gradually grows up with the acquiſition of valuable property, ſo the principal cauſes which naturally introduce ſubordination gradually grow up with the growth of that valuable property.

The cauſes or circumſtances which naturally introduce ſubordination, or which naturally, and antecedent to any civil inſtitution, give ſome men ſome ſuperiority over the greater part of their brethren, ſeem to be four in number.

The firſt of thoſe cauſes or circumſtances is the ſuperiority of perſonal qualifications, of ſtrength, beauty, and agility of body; of wiſdom, and virtue, of prudence, juſtice, fortitude, and moderation of mind. The qualifications of the body, unleſs ſupported by thoſe of the mind, can give little authority in any period of ſociety. He is a very ſtrong man, who, by mere ſtrength of body, can force two weak ones to obey him. The qualifications of the mind can alone give very great authority. They are, however, inviſible qualities; always diſputable, and generally diſputed. No ſociety, whether barbarous or civilized, has ever found it convenient to ſettle the rules of precedency of rank and ſubordination, according to thoſe inviſible qualities; but according to ſomething that is more plain and palpable.

The

The ſecond of thoſe cauſes or circumſtances is the ſuperiority of age. An old man, provided his age is not ſo far advanced as to give ſuſpicion of dotage, is every where more reſpected than a young man of equal rank, fortune, and abilities. Among nations of hunters, ſuch as the native tribes of North America, age is the ſole foundation of rank and precedency. Among them, father is the appellation of a ſuperior; brother, of an equal; and ſon, of an inferior. In the moſt opulent and civilized nations, age regulates rank among thoſe who are in every other reſpect equal, and among whom, therefore, there is nothing elſe to regulate it. Among brothers and among ſiſters, the eldeſt always takes place; and in the ſucceſſion of the paternal eſtate every thing which cannot be divided, but muſt go entire to one perſon, ſuch as a title of honour, is in moſt caſes given to the eldeſt. Age is a plain and palpable quality which admits of no diſpute.

The third of thoſe cauſes or circumſtances is the ſuperiority of fortune. The authority of riches, however, though great in every age of ſociety, is perhaps greateſt in the rudeſt age of ſociety which admits of any conſiderable inequality of fortune. A Tartar chief, the increaſe of whoſe herds and flocks is ſufficient to maintain a thouſand men, cannot well employ that increaſe in any other way than in maintaining a thouſand men. The rude ſtate of his ſociety does not afford him any manufactured produce, any trinkets or baubles of any kind, for which he can exchange that part of his rude produce, which

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which is over and above his own conſumption. The thouſand men whom he thus maintains, depending entirely upon him for their ſubſiſtence, muſt both obey his orders in war, and ſubmit to his juriſdiction in peace. He is neceſſarily both their general and their judge, and his chieftainſhip is the neceſſary effect of the ſuperiority of his fortune. In an opulent and civilized ſociety, a man may poſſeſs a much greater fortune, and yet not be able to command a dozen of people. Though the produce of his eſtate may be ſufficient to maintain, and may perhaps actually maintain, more than a thouſand people, yet as thoſe people pay for every thing which they get from him, as he gives ſcarce any thing to any body but in exchange for an equivalent, there is ſcarce any body who conſiders himſelf as entirely dependent upon him, and his authority extends only over a few menial ſervants. The authority of fortune, however, is very great even in an opulent and civilized ſociety. That it is much greater than that, either of age, or of perſonal qualities, has been the conſtant complaint of every period of ſociety which admitted of any conſiderable inequality of fortune. The firſt period of ſociety, that of hunters, admits of no ſuch inequality. Univerſal poverty eſtabliſhes their univerſal equality, and the ſuperiority, either of age, or of perſonal qualities, are the feeble, but the ſole foundations of authority and ſubordination. There is therefore little or no authority or ſubordination in this period of ſociety. The ſecond period of ſociety, that of ſhepherds,

ſhepherds, admits of very great inequalities of fortune, and there is no period in which the ſuperiority of fortune gives ſo great authority to thoſe who poſſeſs it. There is no period accordingly in which authority and ſubordination are more perfectly eſtabliſhed. The authority of an Arabian ſcherif is very great; that of a Tartar khan altogether deſpotical.

The fourth of thoſe cauſes or circumſtances is the ſuperiority of birth. Superiority of birth ſuppoſes an ancient ſuperiority of fortune in the family of the perſon who claims it. All families are equally ancient; and the anceſtors of the prince, though they may be better known, cannot well be more numerous than thoſe of the beggar. Antiquity of family means every where the antiquity either of wealth, or of that greatneſs which is commonly either founded upon wealth, or accompanied with it. Upſtart greatneſs is every where leſs reſpected than ancient greatneſs. The hatred of uſurpers, the love of the family of an ancient monarch, are, in a great meaſure, founded upon the contempt which men naturally have for the former, and upon their veneration for the latter. As a military officer ſubmits without reluctance to the authority of a ſuperior by whom he has always been commanded, but cannot bear that his inferior ſhould be ſet over his head; ſo men eaſily ſubmit to a family to whom they and their anceſtors have always ſubmitted; but are fired with indignation when another family, in whom they had

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had never acknowledged any ſuch ſuperiority, aſſumes a dominion over them.

The diſtinction of birth, being ſubſequent to the inequality of fortune, can have no place in nations of hunters, among whom all men, being equal in fortune, muſt likewiſe be very nearly equal in birth. The ſon of a wiſe and brave man may, indeed, even among them, be ſomewhat more reſpected than a man of equal merit who has the misfortune to be the ſon of a fool, or a coward. The difference, however, will not be very great; and there never was, I believe, a great family in the world whoſe illuſtration was entirely derived from the inheritance of wiſdom and virtue.

The diſtinction of birth not only may, but always does, take place among nations of ſhepherds. Such nations are always ſtrangers to every ſort of luxury, and great wealth can ſcarce ever be diſſipated among them by improvident profuſion. There are no nations accordingly who abound more in families revered and honoured on account of their deſcent from a long race of great and illuſtrious anceſtors; becauſe there are no nations among whom wealth is likely to continue longer in the ſame families.

Birth and fortune are evidently the two circumſtances which principally ſet one man above another. They are the two great ſources of perſonal diſtinction, and are therefore the principal cauſes which naturally eſtabliſh authority and ſubordination among men. Among nations of ſhepherds

ſhepherds both thoſe cauſes operate with their full force. The great ſhepherd or herdſman, reſpected on account of his great wealth, and of the great number of thoſe who depend upon him for ſubſiſtence, and revered on account of the nobleneſs of his birth, and of the immemorial antiquity of his illuſtrious family, has a natural authority over all the inferior ſhepherds or herdſmen of his horde or clan. He can command the united force of a greater number of people than any of them. His military power is greater than that of any of them. In time of war they are all of them naturally diſpoſed to muſter themſelves under his banner, rather than under that of any other perſon, and his birth and fortune thus naturally procure to him ſome ſort of executive power. By commanding too the united force of a greater number of people than any of them, he is beſt able to compel any one of them who may have injured another to compenſate the wrong. He is the perſon, therefore, to whom all thoſe who are too weak to defend themſelves naturally look up for protection. It is to him that they naturally complain of the injuries which they imagine have been done to them, and his interpoſition in ſuch caſes is more eaſily ſubmitted to, even by the perſon complained of, than that of any other perſon would be. His birth and fortune thus naturally procure him ſome ſort of judicial authority.

It is in the age of ſhepherds, in the ſecond period of ſociety, that the inequality of fortune firſt begins to take place, and introduces among men

men a degree of authority and ſubordination which could not poſſibly exiſt before. It thereby introduces ſome degree of that civil government which is indiſpenſably neceſſary for its own preſervation: and it ſeems to do this naturally, and even independent of the conſideration of that neceſſity. The conſideration of that neceſſity comes no doubt afterwards to contribute very much to maintain and ſecure that authority and ſubordination. The rich, in particular, are neceſſarily intereſted to ſupport that order of things, which can alone ſecure them in the poſſeſſion of their own advantages. Men of inferior wealth combine to defend thoſe of ſuperior wealth in the poſſeſſion of their property, in order that men of ſuperior wealth may combine to defend them in the poſſeſſion of theirs. All the inferior ſhepherds and herdſmen feel that the ſecurity of their own herds and flocks depends upon the ſecurity of thoſe of the great ſhepherd or herdſman; that the maintenance of their leſſer authority depends upon that of his greater authority, and that upon their ſubordination to him depends his power of keeping their inferiors in ſubordination to them. They conſtitute a ſort of little nobility, who feel themſelves intereſted to defend the property and to ſupport the authority of their own little ſovereign, in order that he may be able to defend their property and to ſupport their authority. Civil government, ſo far as it is inſtituted for the ſecurity of property, is in reality inſtituted for the defence of the rich againſt the poor, or of thoſe who

who have ſome property againſt thoſe who have none at all. CHAP. I.

The judicial authority of ſuch a ſovereign, however, far from being a cauſe of expence, was for a long time a ſource of revenue to him. The perſons who applied to him for juſtice were always willing to pay for it, and a preſent never failed to accompany a petition. After the authority of the ſovereign too was thoroughly eſtabliſhed, the perſon found guilty, over and above the ſatisfaction which he was obliged to make to the party, was likewiſe forced to pay an amercement to the ſovereign. He had given trouble, he had diſturbed, he had broke the peace of his lord the king, and for thoſe offences an amercement was thought due. In the Tartar governments of Aſia, in the governments of Europe which were founded by the German and Scythian nations who overturned the Roman empire, the adminiſtration of juſtice was a conſiderable ſource of revenue, both to the ſovereign, and to all the leſſer chiefs or lords who exerciſed under him any particular juriſdiction, either over ſome particular tribe or clan, or over ſome particular territory or diſtrict. Originally both the ſovereign and the inferior chiefs uſed to exerciſe this juriſdiction in their own perſons. Afterwards they univerſally found it convenient to delegate it to ſome ſubſtitute, bailiff, or judge. This ſubſtitute, however, was ſtill obliged to account to his principal or conſtituent for the profits of the juriſdiction. Whoever reads the * inſtructions

* They are to be found in Tyrrel's Hiſtory of England.

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which were given to the judges of the circuit in the time of Henry II. will ſee clearly that thoſe judges were a ſort of itinerant factors, ſent round the country for the purpoſe of levying certain branches of the King's revenue. In thoſe days the adminiſtration of juſtice, not only afforded a certain revenue to the ſovereign, but to procure this revenue ſeems to have been one of the principal advantages which he propoſed to obtain by the adminiſtration of juſtice.

This ſcheme of making the adminiſtration of juſtice ſubſervient to the purpoſes of revenue, could ſcarce fail to be productive of ſeveral very groſs abuſes. The perſon, who applied for juſtice with a large preſent in his hand, was likely to get ſomething more than juſtice; while he, who applied for it with a ſmall one, was likely to get ſomething leſs. Juſtice too might frequently be delayed, in order that this preſent might be repeated. The amercement, beſides, of the perſon complained of, might frequently ſuggeſt a very ſtrong reaſon for finding him in the wrong, even when he had not really been ſo. That ſuch abuſes were far from being uncommon, the ancient hiſtory of every country in Europe bears witneſs.

When the ſovereign or chief exerciſed his judicial authority in his own perſon, how much ſoever he might abuſe it, it muſt have been ſcarce poſſible to get any redreſs; becauſe there could ſeldom be any body powerful enough to call him to account. When he exerciſed it by a bailiff, indeed, redreſs might ſometimes be had. If it

was

was for his own benefit only, that the bailiff had been guilty of any act of injuſtice, the ſovereign himſelf might not always be unwilling to puniſh him, or to oblige him to repair the wrong. But if it was for the benefit of his ſovereign, if it was in order to make court to the perſon who appointed him and who might prefer him, that he had committed any act of oppreſſion, redreſs would upon moſt occaſions be as impoſſible as if the ſovereign had committed it himſelf. In all barbarous governments, accordingly, in all thoſe ancient governments of Europe in particular, which were founded upon the ruins of the Roman empire, the adminiſtration of juſtice appears for a long time to have been extremely corrupt; far from being quite equal and impartial even under the beſt monarchs, and altogether profligate under the worſt.

Among nations of ſhepherds, where the ſovereign or chief is only the greateſt ſhepherd or herdſman of the horde or clan, he is maintained in the ſame manner as any of his vaſſals or ſubjects, by the increaſe of his own herds or flocks. Among thoſe nations of huſbandmen who are but juſt come out of the ſhepherd ſtate, and who are not much advanced beyond that ſtate; ſuch as the Greek tribes appear to have been about the time of the Trojan war, and our German and Scythian anceſtors when they firſt ſettled upon the ruins of the weſtern empire; the ſovereign or chief is, in the ſame manner, only the greateſt landlord of the country, and is maintained, in

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the ſame manner as any other landlord, by a revenue derived from his own private eſtate, or from what, in modern Europe, was called the demeſne of the crown. His ſubjects, upon ordinary occaſions, contribute nothing to his ſupport, except when, in order to protect them from the oppreſſion of ſome of their fellow-ſubjects, they ſtand in need of his authority. The preſents which they make him upon ſuch occaſions, conſtitute the whole ordinary revenue, the whole of the emoluments which, except perhaps upon ſome very extraordinary emergencies, he derives from his dominion over them. When Agamemnon, in Homer, offers to Achilles for his friendſhip the ſovereignty of ſeven Greek cities, the ſole advantage which he mentions as likely to be derived from it, was, that the people would honour him with preſents. As long as ſuch preſents, as long as the emoluments of juſtice, or what may be called the fees of court, conſtituted in this manner the whole ordinary revenue which the ſovereign derived from his ſovereignty, it could not well be expected, it could not even decently be propoſed, that he ſhould give them up altogether. It might, and it frequently was propoſed, that he ſhould regulate and aſcertain them. But after they had been ſo regulated and aſcertained, how to hinder a perſon who was all-powerful from extending them beyond thoſe regulations, was ſtill very difficult, not to ſay impoſſible. During the continuance of this ſtate of things, therefore, the corruption of juſtice, naturally reſulting

reſulting from the arbitrary and uncertain nature of thoſe preſents, ſcarce admitted of any effectual remedy.

But when from different cauſes, chiefly from the continually increaſing expence of defending the nation againſt the invaſion of other nations, the private eſtate of the ſovereign had become altogether inſufficient for defraying the expence of the ſovereignty; and when it had become neceſſary that the people ſhould, for their own ſecurity, contribute towards this expence by taxes of different kinds, it ſeems to have been very commonly ſtipulated, that no preſent for the adminiſtration of juſtice ſhould, under any pretence, be accepted either by the ſovereign, or by his bailiffs and ſubſtitutes, the judges. Thoſe preſents, it ſeems to have been ſuppoſed, could more eaſily be aboliſhed altogether, than effectually regulated and aſcertained. Fixed ſalaries were appointed to the judges, which were ſuppoſed to compenſate to them the loſs of whatever might have been their ſhare of the ancient emoluments of juſtice; as the taxes more than compenſated to the ſovereign the loſs of his. Juſtice was then ſaid to be adminiſtered gratis.

Juſtice, however, never was in reality adminiſtered gratis in any country. Lawyers and attornies, at leaſt, muſt always be paid by the parties; and, if they were not, they would perform their duty ſtill worſe than they actually perform it. The fees annually paid to lawyers and attornies amount, in every court, to a much greater ſum than the ſalaries of the judges. The circumſtance of thoſe ſalaries being paid by the

crown, can no-where much diminiſh the neceſſary expence of a law-ſuit. But it was not ſo much to diminiſh the expence, as to prevent the corruption of juſtice, that the judges were prohibited from receiving any preſent or fee from the parties.

The office of judge is in itſelf ſo very honourable, that men are willing to accept of it, though accompanied with very ſmall emoluments. The inferior office of juſtice of peace, though attended with a good deal of trouble, and in moſt caſes with no emoluments at all, is an object of ambition to the greater part of our country gentlemen. The ſalaries of all the different judges, high and low, together with the whole expence of the adminiſtration and execution of juſtice, even where it is not managed with very good œconomy, makes, in any civilized country, but a very inconſiderable part of the whole expence of government.

The whole expence of juſtice too might eaſily be defrayed by the fees of court; and, without expoſing the adminiſtration of juſtice to any real hazard of corruption, the public revenue might thus be entirely diſcharged from a certain, though, perhaps, but a ſmall incumbrance. It is difficult to regulate the fees of court effectually, where a perſon ſo powerful as the ſovereign is to ſhare in them, and to derive any conſiderable part of his revenue from them. It is very eaſy, where the judge is the principal perſon who can reap any benefit from them. The law can very eaſily oblige the judge to reſpect the regulation, though it might not always be able to make the ſovereign reſpect it. Where the fees of

of court are precisely regulated and ascertained, where they are paid all at once, at a certain period of every process, into the hands of a cashier or receiver, to be by him distributed in certain known proportions among the different judges after the process is decided, and not till it is decided, there seems to be no more danger of corruption than where such fees are prohibited altogether. Those fees, without occasioning any considerable increase in the expence of a law-suit, might be rendered fully sufficient for defraying the whole expence of justice. By not being paid to the judges till the process was determined, they might be some incitement to the diligence of the court in examining and deciding it. In courts which consisted of a considerable number of judges, by proportioning the share of each judge to the number of hours and days which he had employed in examining the process, either in the court or in a committee by order of the court, those fees might give some encouragement to the diligence of each particular judge. Public services are never better performed than when their reward comes only in consequence of their being performed, and is proportioned to the diligence employed in performing them. In the different parliaments of France, the fees of court (called Epices and vacations) constitute the far greater part of the emoluments of the judges. After all deductions are made, the neat salary paid by the crown to a counsellor or judge in the parliament of Toulouse, in rank and dignity the second parliament of the kingdom,

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amounts only to a hundred and fifty livres, about six pounds eleven shillings sterling a year. About seven years ago that sum was in the same place the ordinary yearly wages of a common footman. The distribution of those Epicès too is according to the diligence of the judges. A diligent judge gains a comfortable, though moderate, revenue by his office: An idle one gets little more than his salary. Those parliaments are perhaps, in many respects, not very convenient courts of justice; but they have never been accused; they seem never even to have been suspected of corruption.

The fees of court seem originally to have been the principal support of the different courts of justice in England. Each court endeavoured to draw to itself as much business as it could, and was, upon that account, willing to take cognizance of many suits which were not originally intended to fall under its jurisdiction. The court of King's Bench, instituted for the trial of criminal causes only, took cognizance of civil suits; the plaintiff pretending that the defendant, in not doing him justice, had been guilty of some trespass or misdemeanor. The court of Exchequer, instituted for the levying of the king's revenue, and for enforcing the payment of such debts only as were due to the king, took cognizance of all other contract debts; the plaintiff alleging that he could not pay the king, because the defendant would not pay him. In consequence of such fictions it came, in many cases, to depend altogether upon the parties before what court they would chuse to have their cause tried; and each

each court endeavoured, by ſuperior diſpatch and impartiality, to draw to itſelf as many cauſes as it could. The preſent admirable conſtitution of the courts of juſtice in England was, perhaps, originally in a great meaſure, formed by this emulation, which anciently took place between their reſpective judges; each judge endeavouring to give, in his own court, the ſpeedieſt and moſt effectual remedy, which the law would admit, for every ſort of injuſtice. Originally the courts of law gave damages only for breach of contract. The court of Chancery, as a court of conſcience, firſt took upon it to enforce the ſpecific performance of agreements. When the breach of contract conſiſted in the non-payment of money, the damage ſuſtained could be compenſated in no other way than by ordering payment, which was equivalent to a ſpecific performance of the agreement. In ſuch caſes, therefore, the remedy of the courts of law was ſufficient. It was not ſo in others. When the tenant ſued his lord for having unjuſtly outed him of his leaſe, the damages which he recovered were by no means equivalent to the poſſeſſion of the land. Such cauſes, therefore, for ſome time, went all to the court of Chancery, to the no ſmall loſs of the courts of law. It was to draw back ſuch cauſes to themſelves that the courts of law are ſaid to have invented the artificial and fictitious writ of ejectment, the moſt effectual remedy for an unjuſt outer or diſpoſſeſſion of land.

A ſtamp-duty upon the law proceedings of each particular court, to be levied by that court, and

and applied towards the maintenance of the judges and other officers belonging to it, might, in the ſame manner, afford a revenue ſufficient for defraying the expence of the adminiſtration of juſtice, without bringing any burden upon the general revenue of the ſociety. The judges indeed might, in this caſe, be under the temptation of multiplying unneceſſarily the proceedings upon every cauſe, in order to increaſe, as much as poſſible, the produce of ſuch a ſtamp-duty. It has been the cuſtom in modern Europe to regulate, upon moſt occaſions, the payment of the attornies and clerks of court, according to the number of pages which they had occaſion to write; the court, however, requiring that each page ſhould contain ſo many lines, and each line ſo many words. In order to increaſe their payment, the attornies and clerks have contrived to multiply words beyond all neceſſity, to the corruption of the law language of, I believe, every court of juſtice in Europe. A like temptation might perhaps occaſion a like corruption in the form of law proceedings.

But whether the adminiſtration of juſtice be ſo contrived as to defray its own expence, or whether the judges be maintained by fixed ſalaries paid to them from ſome other fund, it does not ſeem neceſſary that the perſon or perſons entruſted with the executive power ſhould be charged with the management of that fund, or with the payment of thoſe ſalaries. That fund might ariſe from the rent of landed eſtates, the management of each eſtate being entruſted to the particular

particular court which was to be maintained by it. That fund might arife even from the intereft of a fum of money, the lending out of which might, in the fame manner, be entrufted to the court which was to be maintained by it. A part, though indeed but a fmall part, of the falary of the judges of the court of feffion in Scotland, arifes from the intereft of a fum of money. The neceffary inftability of fuch a fund feems, however, to render it an improper one for the maintenance of an inftitution which ought to laft for ever. CHAP. I.

The feparation of the judicial from the executive power feems originally to have arifen from the increafing bufinefs of the fociety, in conſequence of its increafing improvement. The adminiftration of juftice became fo laborious and fo complicated a duty as to require the undivided attention of the perfons to whom it was entrufted. The perfon entrufted with the executive power, not having leifure to attend to the decifion of private caufes himfelf, a deputy was appointed to decide them in his ftead. In the progrefs of the Roman greatnefs, the conful was too much occupied with the political affairs of the ftate, to attend to the adminiftration of juftice. A prætor, therefore, was appointed to adminifter it in his ftead. In the progrefs of the European monarchies which were founded upon the ruins of the Roman empire, the fovereigns and the great lords came univerfally to conſider the adminiftration of juftice as an office, both too laborious and too ignoble for them to execute in their own perfons. They univerfally,

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therefore, discharged themselves of it by appointing a deputy, bailiff, or judge.

When the judicial is united to the executive power, it is scarce possible that justice should not frequently be sacrificed to, what is vulgarly called, politics. The persons entrusted with the great interests of the state may, even without any corrupt views, sometimes imagine it necessary to sacrifice to those interests the rights of a private man. But upon the impartial administration of justice depends the liberty of every individual, the sense which he has of his own security. In order to make every individual feel himself perfectly secure in the possession of every right which belongs to him, it is not only necessary that the judicial should be separated from the executive power, but that it should be rendered as much as possible independent of that power. The judge should not be liable to be removed from his office according to the caprice of that power. The regular payment of his salary should not depend upon the good-will, or even upon the good œconomy of that power.

PART THIRD.

Of the Expence of public Works and public Institutions.

THE third and last duty of the sovereign or commonwealth is that of erecting and maintaining those public institutions and those public works, which, though they may be in the highest degree advantageous to a great society, are, however, of such a nature, that the profit could never repay the expence to any individual or small

ſmall number of individuals, and which it therefore cannot be expected that any individual or ſmall number of individuals ſhould erect or maintain. The performance of this duty requires too very different degrees of expence in the different periods of ſociety.

After the public inſtitutions and public works neceſſary for the defence of the ſociety, and for the adminiſtration of juſtice, both of which have already been mentioned, the other works and inſtitutions of this kind are chiefly thoſe for facilitating the commerce of the ſociety, and thoſe for promoting the inſtruction of the people. The inſtitutions for inſtruction are of two kinds; thoſe for the education of the youth, and thoſe for the inſtruction of people of all ages. The conſideration of the manner in which the expence of thoſe different ſorts of public works and inſtitutions may be moſt properly defrayed, will divide this third part of the preſent chapter into three different articles.

ARTICLE I.

Of the public Works and Inſtitutions for facilitating the Commerce of the Society.

And, firſt, of thoſe which are neceſſary for facilitating Commerce in general.

THAT the erection and maintenance of the public works which facilitate the commerce of any country, ſuch as good roads, bridges, navigable

navigable canals, harbours, &c. muſt require very different degrees of expence in the different periods of ſociety, is evident without any proof. The expence of making and maintaining the public roads of any country muſt evidently increaſe with the annual produce of the land and labour of that country, or with the quantity and weight of the goods which it becomes neceſſary to fetch and carry upon thoſe roads. The ſtrength of a bridge muſt be ſuited to the number and weight of the carriages, which are likely to paſs over it. The depth and the ſupply of water for a navigable canal muſt be proportioned to the number and tunnage of the lighters, which are likely to carry goods upon it; the extent of a harbour to the number of the ſhipping which are likely to take ſhelter in it.

It does not ſeem neceſſary that the expence of thoſe public works ſhould be defrayed from that public revenue, as it is commonly called, of which the collection and application are in moſt countries aſſigned to the executive power. The greater part of ſuch public works may eaſily be ſo managed, as to afford a particular revenue ſufficient for defraying their own expence, without bringing any burden upon the general revenue of the ſociety.

A highway, a bridge, a navigable canal, for example, may in moſt caſes be both made and maintained by a ſmall toll upon the carriages which make uſe of them: a harbour, by a moderate port-duty upon the tunnage of the ſhipping which load or unload in it. The coinage,

another

another inſtitution for facilitating commerce, in many countries, not only defrays its own expence, but affords a ſmall revenue or ſeignorage to the ſovereign. The poſt-office, another inſtitution for the ſame purpoſe, over and above defraying its own expence, affords in almoſt all countries a very conſiderable revenue to the ſovereign.

When the carriages which paſs over a high-way or a bridge, and the lighters which ſail upon a navigable canal, pay toll in proportion to their weight or their tunnage, they pay for the maintenance of thoſe public works exactly in proportion to the wear and tear which they occaſion of them. It ſeems ſcarce poſſible to invent a more equitable way of maintaining ſuch works. This tax or toll too, though it is advanced by the carrier, is finally paid by the conſumer, to whom it muſt always be charged in the price of the goods. As the expence of carriage, however, is very much reduced by means of ſuch public works, the goods, notwithſtanding the toll, come cheaper to the conſumer than they could otherwiſe have done; their price not being ſo much raiſed by the toll, as it is lowered by the cheapneſs of the carriage. The perſon who finally pays this tax, therefore, gains by the application, more than he loſes by the payment of it. His payment is exactly in proportion to his gain. It is in reality no more than a part of that gain which he is obliged to give up in order to get the reſt. It ſeems impoſſible to imagine a more equitable method of raiſing a tax.

When

When the toll upon carriages of luxury, upon coaches, poſt-chaiſes, &c. is made ſomewhat higher in proportion to their weight, than upon carriages of neceſſary uſe, ſuch as carts, waggons, &c. the indolence and vanity of the rich is made to contribute in a very eaſy manner to the relief of the poor, by rendering cheaper the tranſportation of heavy goods to all the different parts of the country.

When high roads, bridges, canals, &c. are in this manner made and ſupported by the commerce which is carried on by means of them, they can be made only where that commerce requires them, and conſequently where it is proper to make them. Their expence too, their grandeur and magnificence, muſt be ſuited to what that commerce can afford to pay. They muſt be made conſequently as it is proper to make them. A magnificent high road cannot be made through a deſart country where there is little or no commerce, or merely becauſe it happens to lead to the country villa of the intendant of the province, or to that of ſome great lord to whom the intendant finds it convenient to make his court. A great bridge cannot be thrown over a river at a place where nobody paſſes, or merely to embelliſh the view from the windows of a neighbouring palace: things which ſometimes happen, in countries where works of this kind are carried on by any other revenue than that which they themſelves are capable of affording.

In ſeveral different parts of Europe the toll or lock-duty upon a canal is the property of private perſons, whoſe private intereſt obliges

them to keep up the canal. If it is not kept in tolerable order, the navigation neceſſarily ceaſes altogether, and along with it the whole profit which they can make by the tolls. If thoſe tolls were put under the management of commiſſioners, who had themſelves no intereſt in them, they might be leſs attentive to the maintenance of the works which produced them. The canal of Languedoc coſt the King of France and the province upwards of thirteen millions of livres, which (at twenty-eight livres the mark of ſilver, the value of French money in the end of the laſt century,) amounted to upwards of nine hundred thouſand pounds ſterling. When that great work was finiſhed, the moſt likely method, it was found, of keeping it in conſtant repair was to make a preſent of the tolls to Riquet the engineer, who planned and conducted the work. Thoſe tolls conſtitute at preſent a very large eſtate to the different branches of the family of that gentleman, who have, therefore, a great intereſt to keep the work in conſtant repair. But had thoſe tolls been put under the management of commiſſioners, who had no ſuch intereſt, they might perhaps have been diſſipated in ornamental and unneceſſary expences, while the moſt eſſential parts of the work were allowed to go to ruin.

The tolls for the maintenance of a high road, cannot with any ſafety be made the property of private perſons. A high road, though entirely neglected, does not become altogether impaſſable, though a canal does. The proprietors of the tolls upon a high road, therefore, might

neglect altogether the repair of the road, and yet continue to levy very nearly the same tolls. It is proper, therefore, that the tolls for the maintenance of such a work should be put under the management of commissioners or trustees.

In Great Britain, the abuses which the trustees have committed in the management of those tolls, have in many cases been very justly complained of. At many turnpikes, it has been said, the money levied is more than double of what is necessary for executing, in the completest manner, the work which is often executed in a very slovenly manner, and sometimes not executed at all. The system of repairing the high roads by tolls of this kind, it must be observed, is not of very long standing. We should not wonder therefore, if it has not yet been brought to that degree of perfection of which it seems capable. If mean and improper persons are frequently appointed trustees; and if proper courts of inspection and account have not yet been established for controlling their conduct, and for reducing the tolls to what is barely sufficient for executing the work to be done by them; the recency of the institution both accounts and apologizes for those defects, of which, by the wisdom of parliament, the greater part may in due time be gradually remedied.

The money levied at the different turnpikes in Great Britain is supposed to exceed so much what is necessary for repairing the roads, that the savings, which, with proper œconomy, might be made from it, have been considered, even by some

ſome miniſters, as a very great reſource which might at ſome time or another be applied to the exigencies of the ſtate. Government, it has been ſaid, by taking the management of the turnpikes into its own hands, and by employing the ſoldiers, who would work for a very ſmall addition to their pay, could keep the roads in good order at a much leſs expence than it can be done by truſtees, who have no other workmen to employ, but ſuch as derive their whole ſubſiſtence from their wages. A great revenue, half a million, perhaps*, it has been pretended, might in this manner be gained without laying any new burden upon the people; and the turnpike roads might be made to contribute to the general expence of the ſtate, in the ſame manner as the poſt-office does at preſent.

That a conſiderable revenue might be gained in this manner, I have no doubt, though probably not near ſo much, as the projectors of this plan have ſuppoſed. The plan itſelf, however, ſeems liable to ſeveral very important objections.

Firſt, if the tolls which are levied at the turnpikes ſhould ever be conſidered as one of the reſources for ſupplying the exigencies of the ſtate, they would certainly be augmented as thoſe exigencies were ſuppoſed to require. According to the policy of Great Britain, therefore, they would probably be augmented very faſt. The

* Since publiſhing the two firſt editions of this book, I have got good reaſons to believe that all the turnpike tolls levied in Great Britain do not produce a neat revenue that amounts to half a million; a ſum which, under the management of Government, would not be ſufficient to keep in repair five of the principal roads in the kingdom.

facility with which a great revenue could be drawn from them, would probably encourage adminiſtration to recur very frequently to this reſource. Though it may, perhaps, be more than doubtful, whether half a million could by any œconomy be ſaved out of the preſent tolls, it can ſcarce be doubted but that a million might be ſaved out of them, if they were doubled; and perhaps two millions, if they were tripled *. This great revenue too might be levied without the appointment of a ſingle new officer to collect and receive it. But the turnpike tolls being continually augmented in this manner, inſtead of facilitating the inland commerce of the country, as at preſent, would ſoon become a very great incumbrance upon it. The expence of tranſporting all heavy goods from one part of the country to another would ſoon be ſo much increaſed, the market for all ſuch goods, conſequently, would ſoon be ſo much narrowed, that their production would be in a great meaſure diſcouraged, and the moſt important branches of the domeſtic induſtry of the country annihilated altogether.

Secondly, a tax upon carriages in proportion to their weight, though a very equal tax when applied to the ſole purpoſe of repairing the roads, is a very unequal one, when applied to any other purpoſe, or to ſupply the common exigencies of the ſtate. When it is applied to the ſole purpoſe above mentioned, each carriage is

* I have now good reaſons to believe that all theſe conjectural ſums are by much too large.

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed to pay exactly for the wear and tear which that carriage occaſions of the roads. But when it is applied to any other purpoſe, each carriage is ſuppoſed to pay for more than that wear and tear, and contributes to the ſupply of ſome other exigency of the ſtate. But as the turnpike toll raiſes the price of goods in proportion to their weight, and not to their value, it is chiefly paid by the conſumers of coarſe and bulky, not by thoſe of precious and light commodities. Whatever exigency of the ſtate therefore this tax might be intended to ſupply, that exigency would be chiefly ſupplied at the expence of the poor, not of the rich; at the expence of thoſe who are leaſt able to ſupply it, not of thoſe who are moſt able.

Thirdly, if government ſhould at any time neglect the reparation of the high roads, it would be ſtill more difficult, than it is at preſent, to compel the proper application of any part of the turnpike tolls. A large revenue might thus be levied upon the people, without any part of it being applied to the only purpoſe to which a revenue levied in this manner ought ever to be applied. If the meanneſs and poverty of the truſtees of turnpike roads render it ſometimes difficult at preſent to oblige them to repair their wrong; their wealth and greatneſs would render it ten times more ſo in the caſe which is here ſuppoſed.

In France, the funds deſtined for the reparation of the high roads are under the immediate direction of the executive power. Thoſe funds

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consist, partly in a certain number of days labour which the country people are in most parts of Europe obliged to give to the reparation of the highways; and partly in such a portion of the general revenue of the state as the King chuses to spare from his other expences.

By the ancient law of France, as well as by that of most other parts of Europe, the labour of the country people was under the direction of a local or provincial magistracy, which had no immediate dependency upon the King's council. But by the present practice both the labour of the country people, and whatever other fund the King may chuse to assign for the reparation of the high roads in any particular province or generality, are entirely under the management of the intendant; an officer who is appointed and removed by the King's council, who receives his orders from it, and is in constant correspondence with it. In the progress of despotism the authority of the executive power gradually absorbs that of every other power in the state, and assumes to itself the management of every branch of revenue which is destined for any public purpose. In France, however, the great post-roads, the roads which make the communication between the principal towns of the kingdom, are in general kept in good order; and in some provinces are even a good deal superior to the greater part of the turnpike roads of England. But what we call the cross-roads, that is, the far greater part of the roads in the country, are entirely neglected, and are in many places abso-

lutely impaſſable for any heavy carriage. In ſome places it is even dangerous to travel on horſeback, and mules are the only conveyance which can ſafely be truſted. The proud miniſter of an oſtentatious court may frequently take pleaſure in executing a work of ſplendour and magnificence, ſuch as a great highway, which is frequently ſeen by the principal nobility, whoſe applauſes not only flatter his vanity, but even contribute to ſupport his intereſt at court. But to execute a great number of little works, in which nothing that can be done can make any great appearance, or excite the ſmalleſt degree of admiration in any traveller, and which, in ſhort, have nothing to recommend them but their extreme utility, is a buſineſs which appears in every reſpect too mean and paultry to merit the attention of ſo great a magiſtrate. Under ſuch an adminiſtration, therefore, ſuch works are almoſt always entirely neglected.

In China, and in ſeveral other governments of Aſia, the executive power charges itſelf both with the reparation of the high roads, and with the maintenance of the navigable canals. In the inſtructions which are given to the governor of each province, thoſe objects, it is ſaid, are conſtantly recommended to him, and the judgment which the court forms of his conduct is very much regulated by the attention which he appears to have paid to this part of his inſtructions. This branch of public police accordingly is ſaid to be very much attended to in all thoſe countries, but particularly in China, where the

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high roads, and ſtill more the navigable canals, it is pretended, exceed very much every thing of the ſame kind which is known in Europe. The accounts of thoſe works however, which have been tranſmitted to Europe, have generally been drawn up by weak and wondering travellers; frequently by ſtupid and lying miſſionaries. If they had been examined by more intelligent eyes, and if the accounts of them had been reported by more faithful witneſſes, they would not, perhaps, appear to be ſo wonderful. The account which Bernier gives of ſome works of this kind in Indoſtan, falls very much ſhort of what had been reported of them by other travellers, more diſpoſed to the marvellous than he was. It may too, perhaps, be in thoſe countries, as it is in France, where the great roads, the great communications which are likely to be the ſubjects of converſation at the court and in the capital, are attended to, and all the reſt neglected. In China, beſides, in Indoſtan, and in ſeveral other governments of Aſia, the revenue of the ſovereign ariſes almoſt altogether from a land-tax or land-rent, which riſes or falls with the riſe and fall of the annual produce of the land. The great intereſt of the ſovereign, therefore, his revenue, is in ſuch countries neceſſarily and immediately connected with the cultivation of the land, with the greatneſs of its produce, and with the value of its produce. But in order to render that produce both as great and as valuable as poſſible, it is neceſſary to procure to it as extenſive a market as poſſible, and conſequently to eſtabliſh

eſtabliſh the freeſt, the eaſieſt, and the leaſt expenſive communication between all the different parts of the country; which can be done only by means of the beſt roads and the beſt navigable canals. But the revenue of the ſovereign does not, in any part of Europe, ariſe chiefly from a land-tax or land-rent. In all the great kingdoms of Europe, perhaps, the greater part of it may ultimately depend upon the produce of the land: But that dependency is neither ſo immediate, nor ſo evident. In Europe, therefore, the ſovereign does not feel himſelf ſo directly called upon to promote the increaſe, both in quantity and value, of the produce of the land, or, by maintaining good roads and canals, to provide the moſt extenſive market for that produce. Though it ſhould be true, therefore, what I apprehend is not a little doubtful, that in ſome parts of Aſia this department of the public police is very properly managed by the executive power, there is not the leaſt probability that, during the preſent ſtate of things, it could be tolerably managed by that power in any part of Europe.

Even thoſe public works which are of ſuch a nature that they cannot afford any revenue for maintaining themſelves, but of which the conveniency is nearly confined to ſome particular place or diſtrict, are always better maintained by a local or provincial revenue, under the management of a local and provincial adminiſtration, than by the general revenue of the ſtate, of which the executive power muſt always have the manage-

management. Were the ſtreets of London to be lighted and paved at the expence of the Treaſury, is there any probability that they would be ſo well lighted and paved as they are at preſent, or even at ſo ſmall an expence? The expence, beſides, inſtead of being raiſed by a local tax upon the inhabitants of each particular ſtreet, pariſh, or diſtrict in London, would, in this caſe, be defrayed out of the general revenue of the ſtate, and would conſequently be raiſed by a tax upon all the inhabitants of the kingdom, of whom the greater part derive no ſort of benefit from the lighting and paving of the ſtreets of London.

The abuſes which ſometimes creep into the local and provincial adminiſtration of a local and provincial revenue, how enormous ſoever they may appear, are in reality, however, almoſt always very trifling, in compariſon of thoſe which commonly take place in the adminiſtration and expenditure of the revenue of a great empire. They are, beſides, much more eaſily corrected. Under the local or provincial adminiſtration of the juſtices of the peace in Great Britain, the ſix days labour which the country people are obliged to give to the reparation of the highways, is not always perhaps very judiciouſly applied, but it is ſcarce ever exacted with any circumſtance of cruelty or oppreſſion. In France, under the adminiſtration of the intendants, the application is not always more judicious, and the exaction is frequently the moſt cruel and oppreſſive. Such Corvées, as they are called, make one of the principal inſtruments of tyranny by which thoſe officers

officers chaſtiſe any pariſh or communeauté which has had the misfortune to fall under their diſpleaſure. CHAP. I.

Of the Public Works and Inſtitutions which are neceſſary for facilitating particular Branches of Commerce.

THE object of the public works and inſtitutions above mentioned is to facilitate commerce in general. But in order to facilitate ſome particular branches of it, particular inſtitutions are neceſſary, which again require a particular and extraordinary expence.

Some particular branches of commerce, which are carried on with barbarous and uncivilized nations, require extraordinary protection. An ordinary ſtore or counting-houſe could give little ſecurity to the goods of the merchants who trade to the weſtern coaſt of Africa. To defend them from the barbarous natives, it is neceſſary that the place where they are depoſited, ſhould be, in ſome meaſure, fortified. The diſorders in the government of Indoſtan have been ſuppoſed to render a like precaution neceſſary even among that mild and gentle people; and it was under pretence of ſecuring their perſons and property from violence, that both the Engliſh and French Eaſt India Companies were allowed to erect the firſt forts which they poſſeſſed in that country. Among other nations, whoſe vigorous government will ſuffer no ſtrangers to poſſeſs any fortified place within their territory, it may be

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be neceſſary to maintain ſome ambaſſador, miniſter, or conſul, who may both decide, according to their own cuſtoms, the differences ariſing among his own countrymen; and, in their diſputes with the natives, may, by means of his public character, interfere with more authority, and afford them a more powerful protection, than they could expect from any private man. The intereſts of commerce have frequently made it neceſſary to maintain miniſters in foreign countries, where the purpoſes, either of war or alliance, would not have required any. The commerce of the Turkey Company firſt occaſioned the eſtabliſhment of an ordinary ambaſſador at Conſtantinople. The firſt Engliſh embaſſies to Ruſſia aroſe altogether from commercial intereſts. The conſtant interference which thoſe intereſts neceſſarily occaſioned between the ſubjects of the different ſtates of Europe, has probably introduced the cuſtom of keeping, in all neighbouring countries, ambaſſadors or miniſters conſtantly reſident even in the time of peace. This cuſtom, unknown to ancient times, ſeems not to be older than the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the ſixteenth century; that is, than the time when commerce firſt began to extend itſelf to the greater part of the nations of Europe, and when they firſt began to attend to its intereſts.

It ſeems not unreaſonable, that the extraordinary expence, which the protection of any particular branch of commerce may occaſion, ſhould be defrayed by a moderate tax upon that particular

particular branch; by a moderate fine, for example, to be paid by the traders when they firſt enter into it, or, what is more equal, by a particular duty of ſo much per cent. upon the goods which they either import into, or export out of, the particular countries with which it is carried on. The protection of trade in general, from pirates and free-booters, is ſaid to have given occaſion to the firſt inſtitution of the duties of cuſtoms. But, if it was thought reaſonable to lay a general tax upon trade, in order to defray the expence of protecting trade in general, it ſhould ſeem equally reaſonable to lay a particular tax upon a particular branch of trade, in order to defray the extraordinary expence of protecting that branch.

The protection of trade in general has always been conſidered as eſſential to the defence of the commonwealth, and, upon that account, a neceſſary part of the duty of the executive power. The collection and application of the general duties of cuſtoms, therefore, have always been left to that power. But the protection of any particular branch of trade is a part of the general protection of trade; a part, therefore, of the duty of that power; and if nations always acted conſiſtently, the particular duties levied for the purpoſes of ſuch particular protection, ſhould always have been left equally to its diſpoſal. But in this reſpect, as well as in many others, nations have not always acted conſiſtently; and in the greater part of the commercial ſtates of Europe, particular companies of merchants have had the addreſs to perſuade the legiſ-

lature to entruſt to them the performance of this part of the duty of the ſovereign, together with all the powers which are neceſſarily connected with it.

Theſe companies, though they may, perhaps, have been uſeful for the firſt introduction of ſome branches of commerce, by making, at their own expence, an experiment which the ſtate might not think it prudent to make, have in the long-run proved, univerſally, either burdenſome or uſeleſs, and have either miſmanaged or confined the trade.

When thoſe companies do not trade upon a joint ſtock, but are obliged to admit any perſon, properly qualified, upon paying a certain fine, and agreeing to ſubmit to the regulations of the company, each member trading upon his own ſtock, and at his own riſk, they are called regulated companies. When they trade upon a joint ſtock, each member ſharing in the common profit or loſs in proportion to his ſhare in this ſtock, they are called joint ſtock companies. Such companies, whether regulated or joint ſtock, ſometimes have, and ſometimes have not, excluſive privileges.

Regulated companies reſemble, in every reſpect, the corporations of trades, ſo common in the cities and towns of all the different countries of Europe; and are a ſort of enlarged monopolies of the ſame kind. As no inhabitant of a town can exerciſe an incorporated trade, without firſt obtaining his freedom in the corporation, ſo in moſt caſes no ſubject of the ſtate can lawfully carry on any branch of foreign trade, for which

which a regulated company is eſtabliſhed, without firſt becoming a member of that company. The monopoly is more or leſs ſtrict according as the terms of admiſſion are more or leſs difficult; and according as the directors of the company have more or leſs authority, or have it more or leſs in their power to manage in ſuch a manner as to confine the greater part of the trade to themſelves and their particular friends. In the moſt ancient regulated companies the privileges of apprenticeſhip were the ſame as in other corporations; and entitled the perſon who had ſerved his time to a member of the company, to become himſelf a member, either without paying any fine, or upon paying a much ſmaller one than what was exacted of other people. The uſual corporation ſpirit, wherever the law does not reſtrain it, prevails in all regulated companies. When they have been allowed to act according to their natural genius, they have always, in order to confine the competition to as ſmall a number of perſons as poſſible, endeavoured to ſubject the trade to many burdenſome regulations. When the law has reſtrained them from doing this, they have become altogether uſeleſs and inſignificant.

The regulated companies for foreign commerce, which at preſent ſubſiſt in Great Britain, are, the ancient merchant adventurers company, now commonly called the Hamburgh Company, the Ruſſia Company, the Eaſtland Company, the Turkey Company, and the African Company.

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The terms of admiſſion into the Hamburgh Company, are now ſaid to be quite eaſy; and the directors either have it not in their power to ſubject the trade to any burdenſome reſtraint or regulations, or, at leaſt, have not of late exerciſed that power. It has not always been ſo. About the middle of the laſt century, the fine for admiſſion was fifty, and at one time one hundred pounds, and the conduct of the company was ſaid to be extremely oppreſſive. In 1643, in 1645, and in 1661, the clothiers and free traders of the Weſt of England complained of them to parliament, as of monopoliſts who confined the trade and oppreſſed the manufactures of the country. Though thoſe complaints produced no act of parliament, they had probably intimidated the company ſo far, as to oblige them to reform their conduct. Since that time, at leaſt, there have been no complaints againſt them. By the 10th and 11th of William III. c. 6. the fine for admiſſion into the Ruſſia Company was reduced to five pounds; and by the 25th of Charles II. c. 7. that for admiſſion into the Eaſtland Company, to forty ſhillings, while, at the ſame time, Sweden, Denmark and Norway, all the countries on the north ſide of the Baltic, were exempted from their excluſive charter. The conduct of thoſe companies had probably given occaſion to thoſe two acts of parliament. Before that time, Sir Joſiah Child had repreſented both theſe and the Hamburgh Company as extremely oppreſſive, and imputed to their bad management the low ſtate of the trade, which

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we at that time carried on to the countries comprehended within their reſpective charters. But though ſuch companies may not, in the preſent times, be very oppreſſive, they are certainly altogether uſeleſs. To be merely uſeleſs, indeed, is perhaps the higheſt eulogy which can ever juſtly be beſtowed upon a regulated company; and all the three companies above mentioned ſeem, in their preſent ſtate, to deſerve this eulogy.

The fine for admiſſion into the Turkey Company was formerly twenty-five pounds for all perſons under twenty-ſix years of age, and fifty pounds for all perſons above that age. Nobody but mere merchants could be admitted; a reſtriction which excluded all ſhop-keepers and retailers. By a bye-law, no Britiſh manufactures could be exported to Turkey but in the general ſhips of the company; and as thoſe ſhips ſailed always from the port of London, this reſtriction confined the trade to that expenſive port, and the traders, to thoſe who lived in London and in its neighbourhood. By another bye-law, no perſon living within twenty miles of London, and not free of the city, could be admitted a member; another reſtriction, which, joined to the foregoing, neceſſarily excluded all but the freemen of London. As the time for the loading and ſailing of thoſe general ſhips depended altogether upon the directors, they could eaſily fill them with their own goods and thoſe of their particular friends, to the excluſion of others, who, they might pretend, had made their propoſals too late. In this ſtate of things, there-

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fore, this company was in every reſpect a ſtrict and oppreſſive monopoly. Thoſe abuſes gave occaſion to the act of the 26th of George II. c. 18. reducing the fine for admiſſion to twenty pounds for all perſons, without any diſtinction of ages, or any reſtriction, either to mere merchants, or to the freemen of London; and granting to all ſuch perſons the liberty of exporting, from all the ports of Great Britain to any port in Turkey, all Britiſh goods of which the exportation was not prohibited; and of importing from thence all Turkiſh goods, of which the importation was not prohibited, upon paying both the general duties of cuſtoms, and the particular duties aſſeſſed for defraying the neceſſary expences of the company; and ſubmitting, at the ſame time, to the lawful authority of the Britiſh ambaſſador and conſuls reſident in Turkey, and to the bye-laws of the company duly enacted. To prevent any oppreſſion by thoſe bye-laws, it was by the ſame act ordained, that if any ſeven members of the company conceived themſelves aggrieved by any bye-law which ſhould be enacted after the paſſing of this act, they might appeal to the Board of Trade and Plantations, (to the authority of which, a committee of the Privy Council has now ſucceeded), provided ſuch appeal was brought within twelve months after the bye-law was enacted; and that if any ſeven members conceived themſelves aggrieved by any bye-law which had been enacted before the paſſing of this act, they might bring a like appeal, provided it was within twelve months

months after the day on which this act was to take place. The experience of one year, however, may not always be sufficient to discover to all the members of a great company the pernicious tendency of a particular bye-law; and if several of them should afterwards discover it, neither the Board of Trade, nor the Committee of Council, can afford them any redress. The object, besides, of the greater part of the bye-laws of all regulated companies, as well as of all other corporations, is not so much to oppress those who are already members, as to discourage others from becoming so; which may be done, not only by a high fine, but by many other contrivances. The constant view of such companies is always to raise the rate of their own profits as high as they can; to keep the market, both for the goods which they export, and for those which they import, as much understocked as they can; which can be done only by restraining the competition, or by discouraging new adventurers from entering into the trade. A fine even of twenty pounds, besides, though it may not, perhaps, be sufficient to discourage any man from entering into the Turkey trade, with an intention to continue in it, may be enough to discourage a speculative merchant from hazarding a single adventure in it. In all trades, the regular established traders, even though not incorporated, naturally combine to raise profits, which are no way so likely to be kept, at all times, down to their proper level, as by the occasional competition of speculative adventurers. The Turkey

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trade, though in ſome meaſure laid open by this act of parliament, is ſtill conſidered by many people as very far from being altogether free. The Turkey Company contribute to maintain an ambaſſador and two or three conſuls, who, like other public miniſters, ought to be maintained altogether by the ſtate, and the trade laid open to all His Majeſty's ſubjects. The different taxes levied by the company, for this and other corporation purpoſes, might afford a revenue much more than ſufficient to enable the ſtate to maintain ſuch miniſters.

Regulated companies, it was obſerved by Sir Joſiah Child, though they had frequently ſupported public miniſters, had never maintained any forts or garriſons in the countries to which they traded: whereas joint ſtock companies frequently had. And in reality the former ſeem to be much more unfit for this ſort of ſervice than the latter. Firſt, the directors of a regulated company have no particular intereſt in the proſperity of the general trade of the company, for the ſake of which, ſuch forts and garriſons are maintained. The decay of that general trade may even frequently contribute to the advantage of their own private trade; as by diminiſhing the number of their competitors, it may enable them both to buy cheaper, and to ſell dearer. The directors of a joint ſtock company, on the contrary, having only their ſhare in the profits which are made upon the common ſtock committed to their management, have no private trade of their own, of which the intereſt can be ſeparated

ſeparated from that of the general trade of the company. Their private intereſt is connected with the proſperity of the general trade of the company; and with the maintenance of the forts and garriſons which are neceſſary for its defence. They are more likely, therefore, to have that continual and careful attention which that maintenance neceſſarily requires. Secondly, the directors of a joint ſtock company have always the management of a large capital, the joint ſtock of the company, a part of which they may frequently employ, with propriety, in building, repairing, and maintaining ſuch neceſſary forts and garriſons. But the directors of a regulated company, having the management of no common capital, have no other fund to employ in this way, but the caſual revenue ariſing from the admiſſion fines, and from the corporation duties, impoſed upon the trade of the company. Though they had the ſame intereſt, therefore, to attend to the maintenance of ſuch forts and garriſons, they can ſeldom have the ſame ability to render that attention effectual. The maintenance of a public miniſter requiring ſcarce any attention, and but a moderate and limited expence, is a buſineſs much more ſuitable both to the temper and abilities of a regulated company.

Long after the time of Sir Joſiah Child, however, in 1750, a regulated company was eſtabliſhed, the preſent company of merchants trading to Africa, which was expreſsly charged at firſt with the maintenance of all the Britiſh forts and garriſons that lie between Cape Blanc and

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For the firſt of theſe purpoſes, the fine for admiſſion is limited to forty ſhillings. The company is prohibited from trading in their corporate capacity, or upon a joint ſtock; from borrowing money upon common ſeal, or from laying any reſtraints upon the trade which may be carried on freely from all places, and by all perſons being Britiſh ſubjects, and paying the fine. The government is in a committee of nine perſons, who meet at London, but who are choſen annually by the freemen of the company at London, Briſtol, and Liverpool; three from each place. No committee-man can be continued in office for more than three years together. Any committee-man might be removed by the Board of Trade and Plantations; now by a committee of Council, after being heard in his own defence. The committee are forbid to export negroes from Africa, or to import any African goods into Great Britain. But as they are charged with the maintenance of forts and garriſons, they may, for that purpoſe, export from Great Britain to Africa,

goods and ſtores of different kinds. Out of the monies which they ſhall receive from the company, they are allowed a ſum not exceeding eight hundred pounds for the ſalaries of their clerks and agents at London, Briſtol, and Liverpool, the houſe-rent of their office at London, and all other expences of management, commiſſion and agency in England. What remains of this ſum, after defraying theſe different expences, they may divide among themſelves, as compenſation for their trouble, in what manner they think proper. By this conſtitution, it might have been expected, that the ſpirit of monopoly would have been effectually reſtrained, and the firſt of theſe purpoſes ſufficiently anſwered. It would ſeem, however, that it had not. Though by the 4th of Geo. III. c. 20. the fort of Senegal, with all its dependencies, had been veſted in the company of merchants trading to Africa, yet in the year following (by the 5th of Geo. III. c. 44.), not only Senegal and its dependencies, but the whole coaſt from the port of Sallee, in South Barbary, to Cape Rouge, was exempted from the juriſdiction of that company, was veſted in the crown, and the trade to it declared free to all His Majeſty's ſubjects. The company had been ſuſpected of reſtraining the trade, and of eſtabliſhing ſome ſort of improper monopoly. It is not, however, very eaſy to conceive how, under the regulations of the 23d Geo. II. they could do ſo. In the printed debates of the Houſe of Commons, not always the moſt authentic records of truth, I obſerve, however, that they have been ac-

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cuſed of this. The members of the Committee of Nine being all merchants, and the governors and factors in their different forts and ſettlements being all dependent upon them, it is not unlikely that the latter might have given peculiar attention to the conſignments and commiſſions of the former, which would eſtabliſh a real monopoly.

For the ſecond of theſe purpoſes, the maintenance of the forts and garriſons, an annual ſum has been allotted to them by parliament, generally about 13,000*l.* For the proper application of this ſum, the committee is obliged to account annually to the Curſitor Baron of Exchequer; which account is afterwards to be laid before parliament. But parliament, which gives ſo little attention to the application of millions, is not likely to give much to that of 13,000*l.* a-year; and the Curſitor Baron of Exchequer, from his profeſſion and education, is not likely to be profoundly ſkilled in the proper expence of forts and garriſons. The captains of His Majeſty's navy, indeed, or any other commiſſioned officers, appointed by the Board of Admiralty, may enquire into the condition of the forts and garriſons, and report their obſervations to that Board. But that Board ſeems to have no direct juriſdiction over the committee, nor any authority to correct thoſe whoſe conduct it may thus enquire into; and the captains of His Majeſty's navy, beſides, are not ſuppoſed to be always deeply learned in the ſcience of fortification. Removal from an office, which can be enjoyed only for

for the term of three years, and of which the lawful emoluments, even during that term, are ſo very ſmall, ſeems to be the utmoſt puniſhment to which any committee-man is liable, for any fault, except direct malverſation, or embezzlement, either of the public money, or of that of the company; and the fear of that puniſhment can never be a motive of ſufficient weight to force a continual and careful attention to a buſineſs, to which he has no other intereſt to attend. The committee are accuſed of having ſent out bricks and ſtones from England, for the reparation of Cape Coaſt Caſtle, on the coaſt of Guinea, a buſineſs for which parliament had ſeveral times granted an extraordinary ſum of money. Theſe bricks and ſtones too, which had thus been ſent upon ſo long a voyage, were ſaid to have been of ſo bad a quality, that it was neceſſary to rebuild from the foundation the walls which had been repaired with them. The forts and garriſons which lie north of Cape Rouge, are not only maintained at the expence of the ſtate, but are under the immediate government of the executive power; and why thoſe which lie ſouth of that Cape, and which too are, in part at leaſt, maintained at the expence of the ſtate, ſhould be under a different government, it ſeems not very eaſy even to imagine a good reaſon. The protection of the Mediterranean trade was the original purpoſe or pretence of the garriſons of Gibraltar and Minorca, and the maintenance and government of thoſe garriſons has always been very properly, committed, not to the Turkey Company,

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Company, but to the executive power. In the extent of its dominion conſiſts; in a great meaſure, the pride and dignity of that power; and it is not very likely to fail in attention to what is neceſſary for the defence of that dominion. The garriſons at Gibraltar and Minorca, accordingly, have never been neglected; though Minorca has been twice taken, and is now probably loſt for ever, that diſaſter was never even imputed to any neglect in the executive power. I would not, however, be underſtood to inſinuate, that either of thoſe expenſive garriſons was ever, even in the ſmalleſt degree, neceſſary for the purpoſe for which they were originally diſmembered from the Spaniſh monarchy. That diſmemberment, perhaps, never ſerved any other real purpoſe than to alienate from England her natural ally the King of Spain, and to unite the two principal branches of the Houſe of Bourbon in a much ſtricter and more permanent alliance than the ties of blood could ever have united them.

Joint ſtock companies, eſtabliſhed either by royal charter or by act of parliament, differ in ſeveral reſpects, not only from regulated companies, but from private copartneries.

Firſt, In a private copartnery, no partner, without the conſent of the company, can transfer his ſhare to another perſon, or introduce a new member into the company. Each member, however, may, upon proper warning, withdraw from the copartnery, and demand payment from them of his ſhare of the common ſtock. In a joint ſtock company, on the contrary, no member can

can demand payment of his ſhare from the company; but each member can, without their conſent, transfer his ſhare to another perſon, and thereby introduce a new member. The value of a ſhare in a joint ſtock is always the price which it will bring in the market; and this may be, either greater or leſs, in any proportion, than the ſum which its owner ſtands credited for in the ſtock of the company.

Secondly, In a private copartnery, each partner is bound for the debts contracted by the company to the whole extent of his fortune. In a joint ſtock company, on the contrary, each partner is bound only to the extent of his ſhare.

The trade of a joint ſtock company is always managed by a court of directors. This court, indeed, is frequently ſubject, in many reſpects, to the controul of a general court of proprietors. But the greater part of thoſe proprietors ſeldom pretend to underſtand any thing of the buſineſs of the company; and when the ſpirit of faction happens not to prevail among them, give themſelves no trouble about it, but receive contentedly ſuch half-yearly or yearly dividend, as the directors think proper to make to them. This total exemption from trouble and from riſk, beyond a limited ſum, encourages many people to become adventurers in joint ſtock companies, who would, upon no account, hazard their fortunes in any private copartnery. Such companies, therefore, commonly draw to themſelves much greater ſtocks than any private copartnery can boaſt of. The trading ſtock of the South Sea Company,

Company, at one time, amounted to upwards of thirty-three millions eight hundred thouſand pounds. The divided capital of the Bank of England amounts, at preſent, to ten millions ſeven hundred and eighty thouſand pounds. The directors of ſuch companies, however, being the managers rather of other people's money than of their own, it cannot well be expected, that they ſhould watch over it with the ſame anxious vigilance with which the partners in a private copartnery frequently watch over their own. Like the ſtewards of a rich man, they are apt to conſider attention to ſmall matters as not for their maſter's honour, and very eaſily give themſelves a diſpenſation from having it. Negligence and profuſion, therefore, muſt always prevail, more or leſs, in the management of the affairs of ſuch a company. It is upon this account that joint ſtock companies for foreign trade have ſeldom been able to maintain the competition againſt private adventurers. They have, accordingly, very ſeldom ſucceeded without an excluſive privilege; and frequently have not ſucceeded with one. Without an excluſive privilege they have commonly miſmanaged the trade. With an excluſive privilege they have both miſmanaged and confined it.

The Royal African Company, the predeceſſors of the preſent African Company, had an excluſive privilege by charter; but as that charter had not been confirmed by act of parliament, the trade, in conſequence of the declaration of rights, was, ſoon after the revolution, laid open to

o all His Majeſty's ſubjects. The Hudſon's Bay Company are, as to their legal rights in the ſame ſituation as the Royal African Company. Their excluſive charter has not been confirmed by act of parliament. The South Sea Company, as long as they continued to be a trading company, had an excluſive privilege confirmed by act of parliament; as have likewiſe the preſent United Company of Merchants trading to the Eaſt Indies.

The Royal African Company ſoon found that they could not maintain the competition againſt private adventurers, whom, notwithſtanding the declaration of rights, they continued for ſome time to call interlopers, and to perſecute as ſuch. In 1698, however, the private adventurers were ſubjected to a duty of ten per cent. upon almoſt all the different branches of their trade, to be employed by the company in the maintenance of their forts and garriſons. But, notwithſtanding the heavy tax, the company were ſtill unable to maintain the competition. Their ſtock and credit gradually declined. In 1712, their debts had become ſo great, that a particular act of parliament was thought neceſſary, both for their ſecurity and for that of their creditors. It was enacted, that the reſolution of two-thirds of theſe creditors in number and value, ſhould bind the reſt, both with regard to the time which ſhould be allowed to the company for the payment of their debts; and with regard to any other agreement which it might be thought proper to make with them concerning thoſe debts. In 1730, their

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their affairs were in so great disorder, that they were altogether incapable of maintaining their forts and garrisons, the sole purpose and pretext of their institution. From that year, till their final dissolution, the parliament judged it necessary to allow the annual sum of ten thousand pounds for that purpose. In 1732, after having been for many years losers by the trade of carrying negroes to the West Indies, they at last resolved to give it up altogether; to sell to the private traders to America the negroes which they purchased upon the coast; and to employ their servants in a trade to the inland parts of Africa for gold dust, elephants' teeth, dying drugs, &c. But their success in this more confined trade was not greater that in their former extensive one. Their affairs continued to go gradually to decline, till at last, being in every respect a bankrupt company, they were dissolved by act of parliament; and their forts and garrisons vested in the present regulated company of merchants trading to Africa. Before the erection of the Royal African Company, there had been three other joint stock companies successively established, one after another, for the African trade. They were all equally unsuccessful. They all, however, had exclusive charters, which, though not confirmed by act of parliament, were in those days supposed to convey a real exclusive privilege.

The Hudson's Bay Company, before their misfortunes in the late war, had been much more fortunate than the Royal African Company. Their necessary

neceſſary expence is much ſmaller. The whole number of people whom they maintain in their different ſettlements and habitations, which they have honoured with the name of forts, is ſaid not to exceed a hundred and twenty perſons. This number, however, is ſufficient to prepare beforehand the cargo of furs and other goods neceſſary for loading their ſhips, which, on account of the ice, can ſeldom remain above ſix or eight weeks in thoſe ſeas. This advantage of having a cargo ready prepared, could not for ſeveral years be acquired by private adventurers, and without it there ſeems to be no poſſibility of trading to Hudſon's Bay. The moderate capital of the company, which, it is ſaid, does not exceed one hundred and ten thouſand pounds, may beſides be ſufficient to enable them to engroſs the whole, or almoſt the whole, trade and ſurplus produce of the miſerable, though extenſive country, comprehended within their charter. No private adventurers, accordingly, have ever attempted to trade to that country in competition with them. This company, therefore, have always enjoyed an excluſive trade in fact, though they may have no right to it in law. Over and above all this, the moderate capital of this company is ſaid to be divided among a very ſmall number of proprietors. But a joint ſtock company, conſiſting of a ſmall number of proprietors, with a moderate capital, approaches very nearly to the nature of a private copartnery, and may be capable of nearly the ſame degree of vigilance and attention. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if, in

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in conſequence of theſe different advantages, the Hudſon's Bay Company had, before the late war, been able to carry on their trade with a conſiderable degree of ſucceſs. It does not ſeem probable, however, that their profits ever approached to what the late Mr. Dobbs imagined them. A much more ſober and judicious writer, Mr. Anderſon, author of The Hiſtorical and Chronological Deduction of Commerce, very juſtly obſerves, that upon examining the accounts which Mr. Dobbs himſelf has given for ſeveral years together, of their exports and imports, and upon making proper allowances for their extraordinary riſk and expence, it does not appear that their profits deſerve to be envied, or that they can much, if at all, exceed the ordinary profits of trade.

The South Sea Company never had any forts or garriſons to maintain, and therefore were entirely exempted from one great expence, to which other joint ſtock companies for foreign trade are ſubject. But they had an immenſe capital divided among an immenſe number of proprietors. It was naturally to be expected, therefore, that folly, negligence, and profuſion ſhould prevail in the whole management of their affairs. The knavery and extravagance of their ſtock-jobbing projects are ſufficiently known, and the explication of them would be foreign to the preſent ſubject. Their mercantile projects were not much better conducted. The firſt trade which they engaged in was that of ſupplying the Spaniſh Weſt Indies with negroes, of which (in conſequence

ſequence of what was called the Aſſiento contract granted them by the treaty of Utrecht) they had the excluſive privilege. But as it was not expected that much profit could be made by this trade, both the Portugueſe and French companies, who had enjoyed it upon the ſame terms before them, having been ruined by it, they were allowed, as compenſation, to ſend annually a ſhip of a certain burden to trade directly to the Spaniſh Weſt Indies. Of the ten voyages which this annual ſhip was allowed to make, they are ſaid to have gained conſiderably by one, that of the Royal Caroline in 1731, and to have been loſers, more or leſs, by almoſt all the reſt. Their ill ſucceſs was imputed, by their factors and agents, to the extortion and oppreſſion of the Spaniſh government; but was, perhaps, principally owing to the profuſion and depredations of thoſe very factors and agents; ſome of whom are ſaid to have acquired great fortunes even in one year. In 1734, the company petitioned the King, that they might be allowed to diſpoſe of the trade and tunnage of their annual ſhip, on account of the little profit which they made by it, and to accept of ſuch equivalent as they could obtain from the King of Spain.

In 1724, this company had undertaken the whale-fiſhery. Of this, indeed, they had no monopoly; but as long as they carried it on, no other Britiſh ſubjects appear to have engaged in it. Of the eight voyages which their ſhips made to Greenland, they were gainers by one, and loſers by all the reſt. After their eighth and laſt voyage, when they had ſold their ſhips,

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ſtores, and utenſils, they found that their whole loſs, upon this branch, capital and intereſt included, amounted to upwards of two hundred and thirty-ſeven thouſand pounds.

In 1722, this company petitioned the parliament to be allowed to divide their immenſe capital of more than thirty-three millions eight hundred thouſand pounds, the whole of which had been lent to government, into two equal parts: the one half, or upwards of ſixteen millions nine hundred thouſand pounds, to be put upon the ſame footing with other government annuities, and not to be ſubject to the debts contracted, or loſſes incurred, by the directors of the company, in the proſecution of their mercantile projects; the other half to remain, as before, a trading ſtock, and to be ſubject to thoſe debts and loſſes. The petition was too reaſonable not to be granted. In 1733, they again petitioned the parliament, that three-fourths of their trading ſtock might be turned into annuity ſtock, and only one-fourth remain as trading ſtock, or expoſed to the hazards ariſing from the bad management of their directors. Both their annuity and trading ſtocks had, by this time, been reduced more than two millions each, by ſeveral different payments from government; ſo that this fourth amounted only to 3,662,784l. 8s. 6d. In 1748, all the demands of the company upon the King of Spain, in conſequence of the Aſſiento contract, were, by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, given up for what was ſuppoſed an equivalent. An end was put to their trade with the Spaniſh Weſt Indies, the remainder of their trading ſtock

ſtock was turned into an annuity ſtock, and the company ceaſed in every reſpect to be a trading company. CHAP. I.

It ought to be obſerved, that in the trade which the South Sea Company carried on by means of their annual ſhip, the only trade by which it ever was expected that they could make any conſiderable profit, they were not without competitors, either in the foreign or in the home market. At Carthagena, Porto Bello, and La Vera Cruz, they had to encounter the competition of the Spaniſh merchants, who brought from Cadiz, to thoſe markets, European goods, of the ſame kind with the outward cargo of their ſhip; and in England they had to encounter that of the Engliſh merchants, who imported from Cadiz goods of the Spaniſh Weſt Indies, of the ſame kind with the inward cargo. The goods both of the Spaniſh and Engliſh merchants, indeed, were, perhaps, ſubject to higher duties. But the loſs occaſioned by the negligence, profuſion, and malverſation of the ſervants of the company, had probably been a tax much heavier than all thoſe duties. That a joint ſtock company ſhould be able to carry on ſucceſsfully any branch of foreign trade, when private adventurers can come into any ſort of open and fair competition with them, ſeems contrary to all experience.

The old Engliſh Eaſt India Company was eſtabliſhed in 1600, by a charter from Queen Elizabeth. In the firſt twelve voyages which they fitted out for India, they appear to have traded as a regulated company, with ſeparate ſtocks,

though only in the general ſhips of the company. In 1612, they united into a joint ſtock. Their charter was excluſive, and though not confirmed by act of parliament, was in thoſe days ſuppoſed to convey a real excluſive privilege. For many years, therefore, they were not much diſturbed by interlopers. Their capital, which never exceeded ſeven hundred and forty-four thouſand pounds, and of which fifty pounds was a ſhare, was not ſo exorbitant, nor their dealings ſo extenſive, as to afford either a pretext for groſs negligence and profuſion, or a cover to groſs malverſation. Notwithſtanding ſome extraordinary loſſes, occaſioned partly by the malice of the Dutch Eaſt India Company, and partly by other accidents, they carried on for many years a ſucceſsful trade. But in proceſs of time, when the principles of liberty were better underſtood, it became every day more and more doubtful how far a royal charter, not confirmed by act of parliament, could convey an excluſive privilege. Upon this queſtion the deciſions of the courts of juſtice were not uniform, but varied with the authority of government and the humours of the times. Interlopers multiplied upon them; and towards the end of the reign of Charles II. through the whole of that of James II. and during a part of that of William III. reduced them to great diſtreſs. In 1698, a propoſal was made to parliament of advancing two millions to government at eight per cent. provided the ſubſcribers were erected into a new Eaſt India Company with excluſive privileges. The old Eaſt India Company offered ſeven hundred thouſand pounds,

pounds, nearly the amount of their capital, at four per cent. upon the ſame conditions. But ſuch was at that time the ſtate of public credit, that it was more convenient for government to borrow two millions at eight per cent. than ſeven hundred thouſand pounds at four. The propoſal of the new ſubſcribers was accepted, and a new Eaſt India Company eſtabliſhed in conſequence. The old Eaſt India Company, however, had a right to continue their trade till 1701. They had, at the ſame time, in the name of their treaſurer, ſubſcribed, very artfully, three hundred and fifteen thouſand pounds into the ſtock of the new. By a negligence in the expreſſion of the act of parliament, which veſted the Eaſt India trade in the ſubſcribers to this loan of two millions, it did not appear evident that they were all obliged to unite into a joint ſtock. A few private traders, whoſe ſubſcriptions amounted only to ſeven thouſand two hundred pounds, inſiſted upon the privilege of trading ſeparately upon their own ſtocks and at their own riſk. The old Eaſt India Company had a right to a ſeparate trade upon their old ſtock till 1701; and they had likewiſe, both before and after that period, a right, like that of other private traders, to a ſeparate trade upon the three hundred and fifteen thouſand pounds, which they had ſubſcribed into the ſtock of the new company. The competition of the two companies with the private traders, and with one another, is ſaid to have well nigh ruined both. Upon a ſubſequent occaſion, in 1730, when a propoſal was made to parliament for putting the trade under

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the management of a regulated company, and thereby laying it in ſome meaſure open, the Eaſt India Company, in oppoſition to this propoſal, repreſented in very ſtrong terms, what had been, at this time, the miſerable effects, as they thought them, of this competition. In India, they ſaid, it raiſed the price of goods ſo high, that they were not worth the buying; and in England, by overſtocking the market, it ſunk their price ſo low, that no profit could me made by them. That by a more plentiful ſupply, to the great advantage and conveniency of the public, it muſt have reduced, very much, the price of India goods in the Engliſh market, cannot well be doubted; but that it ſhould have raiſed very much their price in the Indian market, ſeems not very probable, as all the extraordinary demand which that competition could occaſion, muſt have been but as a drop of water in the immenſe ocean of Indian commerce. The increaſe of demand, beſides, though in the beginning it may ſometimes raiſe the price of goods, never fails to lower it in the long run. It encourages production, and thereby increaſes the competition of the producers, who, in order to underſell one another, have recourſe to new diviſions of labour and new improvements of art, which might never otherwiſe have been thought of. The miſerable effects of which the company complained, were the cheapneſs of conſumption and the encouragement given to production, preciſely the two effects which it is the great buſineſs of political œconomy to promote. The competition, however, of which they gave this doleful

doleful account, had not been allowed to be of long continuance. In 1702, the two companies were, in ſome meaſure, united by an indenture tripartite, to which the Queen was the third party; and in 1708, they were, by act of parliament, perfectly conſolidated into one company by their preſent name of The United Company of Merchants trading to the Eaſt Indies. Into this act it was thought worth while to inſert a clauſe, allowing the ſeparate traders to continue their trade till Michaelmas 1711, but at the ſame time empowering the directors, upon three years notice, to redeem their little capital of ſeven thouſand two hundred pounds, and thereby to convert the whole ſtock of the company into a joint ſtock. By the ſame act, the capital of the company, in conſequence of a new loan to government, was augmented from two millions to three millions two hundred thouſand pounds. In 1743, the company advanced another million to government. But this million being raiſed, not by a call upon the proprietors, but by ſelling annuities and contracting bond-debts, it did not augment the ſtock upon which the proprietors could claim a dividend. It augmented, however, their trading ſtock, it being equally liable with the other three millions two hundred thouſand pounds to the loſſes ſuſtained, and debts contracted, by the company in proſecution of their mercantile projects. From 1708, or at leaſt from 1711, this company, being delivered from all competitors, and fully eſtabliſhed in the monopoly of the Engliſh commerce to the Eaſt Indies, carried on a ſucceſsful trade, and from their profits made

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annually a moderate dividend to their proprietors. During the French war which began in 1741, the ambition of Mr. Dupleix, the French governor of Pondicherry, involved them in the wars of the Carnatic, and in the politics of the Indian princes. After many ſignal ſucceſſes, and equally ſignal loſſes, they at laſt loſt Madras, at that time their principal ſettlement in India. It was reſtored to them by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle; and about this time the ſpirit of war and conqueſt ſeems to have taken poſſeſſion of their ſervants in India, and never ſince to have left them. During the French war which began in 1755, their arms partook of the general good fortune of thoſe of Great Britain. They defended Madras, took Pondicherry, recovered Calcutta, and acquired the revenues of a rich and extenſive territory, amounting, it was then ſaid, to upwards of three millions a-year. They remained for ſeveral years in quiet poſſeſſion of this revenue: But in 1767, adminiſtration laid claim to their territorial acquiſitions, and the revenue ariſing from them, as of right belonging to the crown; and the company, in compenſation for this claim, agreed to pay to government four hundred thouſand pounds a-year. They had before this gradually augmented their dividend from about ſix to ten per cent.; that is, upon their capital of three millions two hundred thouſand pounds, they had increaſed it by a hundred and twenty-eight thouſand pounds, or had raiſed it from one hundred and ninety-two thouſand, to three hundred and twenty thouſand pounds a-year. They were attempting about this

this time to raiſe it ſtill further, to twelve and a half per cent. which would have made their annual payments to their proprietors equal to what they had agreed to pay annually to government, or to four hundred thouſand pounds a-year. But during the two years in which their agreement with government was to take place, they were reſtrained from any further increaſe of dividend by two ſucceſſive acts of parliament, of which the object was to enable them to make a ſpeedier progreſs in the payment of their debts, which were at this time eſtimated at upwards of ſix or ſeven millions ſterling. In 1769, they renewed their agreement with government for five years more, and ſtipulated, that during the courſe of that period they ſhould be allowed gradually to increaſe their dividend to twelve and a half per cent.; never increaſing it, however, more than one per cent. in one year. This increaſe of dividend, therefore, when it had riſen to its utmoſt height, could augment their annual payments, to their proprietors and government together, but by ſix hundred and eight thouſand pounds, beyond what they had been before their late territorial acquiſitions. What the groſs revenue of thoſe territorial acquiſitions was ſuppoſed to amount to, has already been mentioned; and by an account brought by the Cruttenden Eaſt Indiamen in 1768, the nett revenue, clear of all deductions and military charges, was ſtated at two millions forty-eight thouſand ſeven hundred and forty-ſeven pounds. They were ſaid at the ſame time to poſſeſs another revenue, ariſing partly from lands, but chiefly from the cuſtoms

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eſtabliſhed at their different ſettlements, amounting to four hundred and thirty-nine thouſand pounds. The profits of their trade too, according to the evidence of their chairman before the Houſe of Commons, amounted at this time to at leaſt four hundred thouſand pounds a-year; according to that of their accomptant, to at leaſt five hundred thouſand; according to the loweſt account, at leaſt equal to the higheſt dividend that was to be paid to their proprietors. So great a revenue might certainly have afforded an augmentation of ſix hundred and eight thouſand pounds in their annual payments; and at the ſame time have left a large ſinking fund ſufficient for the ſpeedy reduction of their debts. In 1773, however, their debts, inſtead of being reduced, were augmented by an arrear to the treaſury in the payment of the four hundred thouſand pounds, by another to the cuſtom-houſe for duties unpaid, by a large debt to the bank for money borrowed, and by a fourth for bills drawn upon them from India, and wantonly accepted, to the amount of upwards of twelve hundred thouſand pounds. The diſtreſs which theſe accumulated claims brought upon them, obliged them not only to reduce all at once their dividend to ſix per cent. but to throw themſelves upon the mercy of government, and to ſupplicate, firſt, a releaſe from the further payment of the ſtipulated four hundred thouſand pounds a-year; and, ſecondly, a loan of fourteen hundred thouſand, to ſave them from immediate bankruptcy. The great increaſe of their fortune had, it ſeems, only ſerved to furniſh their ſervants with a pretext for greater profuſion,

fuſion, and a cover for greater malverſation, than in proportion even to that increaſe of fortune. The conduct of their ſervants in India, and the general ſtate of their affairs both in India and in Europe, became the ſubject of a parliamentary inquiry; in conſequence of which ſeveral very important alterations were made in the conſtitution of their government, both at home and abroad. In India their principal ſettlements of Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta, which had before been altogether independent of one another, were ſubjected to a governor-general, aſſiſted by a council of four aſſeſſors, parliament aſſuming to itſelf the firſt nomination of this governor and council who were to reſide at Calcutta; that city having now become, what Madras was before, the moſt important of the Engliſh ſettlements in India. The court of the mayor of Calcutta, originally inſtituted for the trial of mercantile cauſes, which aroſe in the city and neighbourhood, had gradually extended its juriſdiction with the extenſion of the empire. It was now reduced and confined to the original purpoſe of its inſtitution. Inſtead of it a new ſupreme court of judicature was eſtabliſhed, conſiſting of a chief juſtice and three judges to be appointed by the crown. In Europe, the qualification neceſſary to entitle a proprietor to vote at their general courts was raiſed, from five hundred pounds, the original price of a ſhare in the ſtock of the company, to a thouſand pounds. In order to vote upon this qualification too, it was declared neceſſary that he ſhould have poſſeſſed it, if acquired by his own purchaſe, and not by inheritance, for at leaſt

BOOK V. leaſt one year, inſtead of ſix months, the term requiſite before. The court of twenty-four directors had before been choſen annually; but it was now enacted that each director ſhould, for the future, be choſen for four years; ſix of them, however, to go out of office by rotation every year, and not to be capable of being re-choſen at the election of the ſix new directors for the enſuing year. In conſequence of theſe alterations, the courts, both of the proprietors and directors, it was expected, would be likely to act with more dignity and ſteadineſs than they had uſually done before. But it ſeems impoſſible, by any alterations, to render thoſe courts, in any reſpect, fit to govern, or even to ſhare in the government of a great empire; becauſe the greater part of their members muſt always have too little intereſt in the proſperity of that empire, to give any ſerious attention to what may promote it. Frequently a man of great, ſometimes even a man of ſmall fortune, is willing to purchaſe a thouſand pounds ſhare in India ſtock, merely for the influence which he expects to acquire by a vote in the court of proprietors. It gives him a ſhare, though not in the plunder, yet in the appointment of the plunderers of India; the court of directors, though they make that appointment, being neceſſarily more or leſs under the influence of the proprietors, who not only elect thoſe directors, but ſometimes over-rule the appointments of their ſervants in India. Provided he can enjoy this influence for a few years, and thereby provide for a certain number of his friends, he frequently cares little about the dividend;

vidend; or even about the value of the ſtock upon which his vote is founded. About the proſperity of the great empire, in the government of which that vote gives him a ſhare, he ſeldom cares at all. No other ſovereigns ever were, or, from the nature of things, ever could be, ſo perfectly indifferent about the happineſs or miſery of their ſubjects, the improvement or waſte of their dominions, the glory or diſgrace of their adminiſtration; as, from irreſiſtible moral cauſes, the greater part of the proprietors of ſuch a mercantile company are, and neceſſarily muſt be. This indifference too was more likely to be increaſed than diminiſhed by ſome of the new regulations which were made in conſequence of the parliamentary inquiry. By a reſolution of the Houſe of Commons, for example, it was declared, that when the fourteen hundred thouſand pounds, lent to the company by government, ſhould be paid, and their bond debts be reduced to fifteen hundred thouſand pounds, they might then, and not till then, divide eight per cent. upon their capital; and that whatever remained of their revenues and neat profits at home, ſhould be divided into four parts; three of them to be paid into the Exchequer for the uſe of the public, and the fourth to be reſerved as a fund, either for the further reduction of their bond-debts, or for the diſcharge of other contingent exigencies, which the company might labour under. But if the company were bad ſtewards and bad ſovereigns, when the whole of their nett revenue and profits belonged to themſelves, and were at their own diſpoſal, they were ſurely not likely to be better,

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when three-fourths of them were to belong to other people, and the other fourth, though to be laid out for the benefit of the company, yet to be ſo, under the inſpection, and with the approbation, of other people.

It might be more agreeable to the company that their own ſervants and dependants ſhould have either the pleaſure of waſting, or the profit of embezzling whatever ſurplus might remain, after paying the propoſed dividend of eight per cent., than that it ſhould come into the hands of a ſet of people with whom thoſe reſolutions could ſcarce fail to ſet them, in ſome meaſure, at variance. The intereſt of thoſe ſervants and dependants might ſo far predominate in the court of proprietors, as ſometimes to diſpoſe it to ſupport the authors of depredations which had been committed, in direct violation of its own authority. With the majority of proprietors, the ſupport even of the authority of their own court might ſometimes be a matter of leſs conſequence, than the ſupport of thoſe who had ſet that authority at defiance.

The regulations of 1773, accordingly did not put an end to the diſorders of the company's government in India. Notwithſtanding that, during a momentary fit of good conduct, they had at one time collected into the treaſury of Calcutta, more than three millions ſterling; notwithſtanding that they had afterwards extended, either their dominion, or their depredations over a vaſt acceſſion of ſome of the richeſt and moſt fertile countries in India; all was waſted and deſtroyed. They found themſelves altogether un-

prepared to ſtop or reſiſt the incurſion of Hyder Ali; and in conſequence of thoſe diſorders, the company is now (1784) in greater diſtreſs than ever; and, in order to prevent immediate bankruptcy, is once more reduced to ſupplicate the aſſiſtance of government. Different plans have been propoſed by the different parties in parliament, for the better management of its affairs. And all thoſe plans ſeem to agree in ſuppoſing, what was indeed always abundantly evident, that it is altogether unfit to govern its territorial poſſeſſions. Even the company itſelf ſeems to be convinced of its own incapacity ſo far, and ſeems, upon that account, willing to give them up to government.

With the right of poſſeſſing forts and garriſons in diſtant and barbarous countries, is neceſſarily connected the right of making peace and war in thoſe countries. The joint ſtock companies which have had the one right, have conſtantly exerciſed the other, and have frequently had it expreſsly conferred upon them. How unjuſtly, how capriciouſly, how cruelly they have commonly exerciſed it, is too well known from recent experience.

When a company of merchants undertake, at their own riſk and expence, to eſtabliſh a new trade with ſome remote and barbarous nation, it may not be unreaſonable to incorporate them into a joint ſtock company, and to grant them, in caſe of their ſucceſs, a monopoly of the trade for a certain number of years. It is the eaſieſt and moſt natural way in which the ſtate can recompenſe them for hazarding a dangerous and expenſive

penſive experiment, of which the public is afterwards to reap the benefit. A temporary monopoly of this kind may be vindicated upon the ſame principles upon which a like monopoly of a new machine is granted to its inventor, and that of a new book to its author. But upon the expiration of the term, the monopoly ought certainly to determine; the forts and garriſons, if it was found neceſſary to eſtabliſh any, to be taken into the hands of government, their value to be paid to the company, and the trade to be laid open to all the ſubjects of the ſtate. By a perpetual monopoly, all the other ſubjects of the ſtate are taxed very abſurdly in two different ways; firſt, by the high price of goods, which, in the caſe of a free trade, they could buy much cheaper; and, ſecondly, by their total excluſion from a branch of buſineſs, which it might be both convenient and profitable for many of them to carry on. It is for the moſt worthleſs of all purpoſes too that they are taxed in this manner. It is merely to enable the company to ſupport the negligence, profuſion, and malverſation of their own ſervants, whoſe diſorderly conduct ſeldom allows the dividend of the company to exceed the ordinary rate of profit in trades which are altogether free, and very frequently makes it fall even a good deal ſhort of that rate. Without a monopoly, however, a joint ſtock company, it would appear from experience, cannot long carry on any branch of foreign trade. To buy in one market, in order to ſell, with profit, in another, when there are many competitors in both; to watch over, not only the occaſional variations

variations in the demand, but the much greater and more frequent variations in the competition, or in the ſupply which that demand is likely to get from other people, and to ſuit with dexterity and judgment both the quantity and quality of each aſſortment of goods to all theſe circumſtances, is a ſpecies of warfare of which the operations are continually changing, and which can ſcarce ever be conducted ſucceſsfully, without ſuch an unremitting exertion of vigilance and attention, as cannot long be expected from the directors of a joint ſtock company. The Eaſt India Company, upon the redemption of their funds, and the expiration of their excluſive privilege, have a right, by act of parliament, to continue a corporation with a joint ſtock, and to trade in their corporate capacity to the Eaſt Indies in common with the reſt of their fellow-ſubjects. But in this ſituation, the ſuperior vigilance and attention of private adventurers would, in all probability, ſoon make them weary of the trade.

An eminent French author, of great knowledge in matters of political œconomy, the Abbé Morellet, gives a liſt of fifty-five joint ſtock companies for foreign trade, which have been eſtabliſhed in different parts of Europe ſince the year 1600, and which, according to him, have all failed from miſmanagement, notwithſtanding they had excluſive privileges. He has been miſinformed with regard to the hiſtory of two or three of them, which were not joint ſtock companies and have not failed. But, in compenſation, there have been ſeveral joint ſtock

companies which have failed, and which he has omitted.

The only trades which it ſeems poſſible for a joint ſtock company to carry on ſucceſsfully, without an excluſive privilege, are thoſe, of which all the operations are capable of being reduced to what is called a routine, or to ſuch a uniformity of method as admits of little or no variation. Of this kind is, firſt, the banking trade; ſecondly, the trade of inſurance from fire, and from ſea riſk and capture in time of war; thirdly, the trade of making and maintaining a navigable cut or canal; and, fourthly, the ſimilar trade of bringing water for the ſupply of a great city.

Though the principles of the banking trade may appear ſomewhat obſtruſe, the practice is capable of being reduced to ſtrict rules. To depart upon any occaſion from thoſe rules, in conſequence of ſome flattering ſpeculation of extraordinary gain, is almoſt always extremely dangerous, and frequently fatal to the banking company which attempts it. But the conſtitution of joint ſtock companies renders them in general more tenacious of eſtabliſhed rules than any private copartnery. Such companies, therefore, ſeem extremely well fitted for this trade. The principal banking companies in Europe, accordingly, are joint ſtock companies, many of which manage their trade very ſucceſsfully without any excluſive privilege. The Bank of England has no other excluſive privilege, except that no other banking company in England ſhall conſiſt of more than ſix perſons. The two banks

banks of Edinburgh are joint ſtock companies without any excluſive privilege.

The value of the riſk, either from fire, or from loſs by ſea, or by capture, though it cannot, perhaps, be calculated very exactly, admits, however, of ſuch a groſs eſtimation as renders it, in ſome degree, reducible to ſtrict rule and method. The trade of inſurance, therefore, may be carried on ſucceſsfully by a joint ſtock company, without any excluſive privilege. Neither the London Aſſurance, nor the Royal Exchange Aſſurance companies, have any ſuch privilege.

When a navigable cut or canal has been once made, the management of it becomes quite ſimple and eaſy, and it is reducible to ſtrict rule and method. Even the making of it is ſo, as it may be contracted for with undertakers at ſo much a mile, and ſo much a lock. The ſame thing may be ſaid of a canal, an aqueduct, or a great pipe for bringing water to ſupply a great city. Such undertakings, therefore, may be, and accordingly frequently are, very ſucceſsfully managed by joint ſtock companies without any excluſive privilege.

To eſtabliſh a joint ſtock company, however, for any undertaking, merely becauſe ſuch a company might be capable of managing it ſucceſsfully; or to exempt a particular ſet of dealers from ſome of the general laws which take place with regard to all their neighbours, merely becauſe they might be capable of thriving if they had ſuch an exemption, would certainly not be reaſonable. To render ſuch an eſtabliſhment perfectly reaſonable, with the circumſtance of being reducible to ſtrict rule and method, two

other circumſtances ought to concur. Firſt, it ought to appear with the cleareſt evidence, that the undertaking is of greater and more general utility than the greater part of common trades; and ſecondly, that it requires a greater capital than can eaſily be collected into a private copartnery. If a moderate capital were ſufficient, the great utility of the undertaking would not be a ſufficient reaſon for eſtabliſhing a joint ſtock company; becauſe, in this caſe, the demand for what it was to produce would readily and eaſily be ſupplied by private adventurers. In the four trades above mentioned, both thoſe circumſtances concur.

The great and general utility of the banking trade when prudently managed, has been fully explained in the ſecond book of this enquiry. But a public bank which is to ſupport public credit, and upon particular emergencies to advance to government the whole produce of a tax, to the amount, perhaps, of ſeveral millions, a year or two before it comes in, requires a greater capital than can eaſily be collected into any private copartnery.

The trade of inſurance gives great ſecurity to the fortunes of private people, and by dividing among a great many that loſs which would ruin an individual, makes it fall light and eaſy upon the whole ſociety. In order to give this ſecurity, however, it is neceſſary that the inſurers ſhould have a very large capital. Before the eſtabliſhmant of the two joint ſtock companies for inſurance in London, a liſt, it is ſaid, was laid before the attorney-general, of one hundred and fifty private inſurers who had failed in the courſe of a few years.

That

That navigable cuts and canals, and the works which are ſometimes neceſſary for ſupplying a great city with water, are of great and general utility; while at the ſame time they frequently require a greater expence than ſuits the fortunes of private people, is ſufficiently obvious.

Except the four trades above mentioned, I have not been able to recollect any other in which all the three circumſtances, requiſite for rendering reaſonable the eſtabliſhment of a joint ſtock company, concur. The Engliſh copper company of London, the lead ſmelting company, the glaſs grinding company, have not even the pretext of any great or ſingular utility in the object which they purſue; nor does the purſuit of that object ſeem to require any expence unſuitable to the fortunes of many private men. Whether the trade which thoſe companies carry on, is reducible to ſuch ſtrict rule and method as to render it fit for the management of a joint ſtock company, or whether they have any reaſon to boaſt of their extraordinary profits, I do not pretend to know. The mine-adventurers company has been long ago bankrupt. A ſhare in the ſtock of the Britiſh Linen Company of Edinburgh ſells, at preſent, very much below par, though leſs ſo than it did ſome years ago. The joint ſtock companies, which are eſtabliſhed for the public-ſpirited purpoſe of promoting ſome particular manufacture, over and above managing their own affairs ill, to the diminution of the general ſtock of the ſociety, can in other reſpects ſcarce ever fail to do more harm than good. Notwithſtanding the moſt upright intentions, the unavoidable partiality of their directors to particular-

cular branches of the manufacture, of which the undertakers miſlead and impoſe upon them, is a real diſcouragement to the reſt, and neceſſarily breaks, more or leſs, that natural proportion which would otherwiſe eſtabliſh itſelf between judicious induſtry and profit, and which, to the general induſtry of the country, is of all encouragements the greateſt and moſt effectual.

Article II.

Of the Expence of the Inſtitutions for the Education of Youth.

THE inſtitutions for the education of the youth may, in the ſame manner, furniſh a revenue ſufficient for defraying their own expence. The fee or honorary which the ſcholar pays to the maſter naturally conſtitutes a revenue of this kind.

Even where the reward of the maſter does not ariſe altogether from this natural revenue, it ſtill is not neceſſary that it ſhould be derived from that general revenue of the ſociety, of which the collection and application are, in moſt countries, aſſigned to the executive power. Through the greater part of Europe, accordingly, the endowment of ſchools and colleges makes either no charge upon that general revenue, or but a very ſmall one. It every where ariſes chiefly from ſome local or provincial revenue, from the rent of ſome landed eſtate, or from the intereſt of ſome ſum of money allotted and put under the management of truſtees for this particular purpoſe, ſometimes by the ſovereign himſelf, and ſometimes by ſome private donor.

Have

Have thoſe public endowments contributed in general to promote the end of their inſtitution? Have they contributed to encourage the diligence, and to improve the abilities of the teachers? Have they directed the courſe of education towards objects more uſeful, both to the individual and to the public, than thoſe to which it would naturally have gone of its own accord? It ſhould not ſeem very difficult to give at leaſt a probable anſwer to each of thoſe queſtions.

In every profeſſion, the exertion of the greater part of thoſe who exerciſe it, is always in proportion to the neceſſity they are under of making that exertion. This neceſſity is greateſt with thoſe to whom the emoluments of their profeſſion are the only ſource from which they expect their fortune, or even their ordinary revenue and ſubſiſtence. In order to acquire this fortune, or even to get this ſubſiſtence, they muſt, in the courſe of a year, execute a certain quantity of work of a known value; and, where the competition is free, the rivalſhip of competitors, who are all endeavouring to juſtle one another out of employment, obliges every man to endeavour to execute his work with a certain degree of exactneſs. The greatneſs of the objects which are to be acquired by ſucceſs in ſome particular profeſſions may, no doubt, ſometimes animate the exertion of a few men of extraordinary ſpirit and ambition. Great objects, however, are evidently not neceſſary in order to occaſion the greateſt exertions. Rivalſhip and emulation render excellency, even in mean profeſſions, an object of ambition,

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bition, and frequently occaſion the very greateſt exertions. Great objects, on the contrary, alone and unſupported by the neceſſity of application, have ſeldom been ſufficient to occaſion any conſiderable exertion. In England, ſucceſs in the profeſſion of the law leads to ſome very great objects of ambition; and yet how few men, born to eaſy fortunes, have ever in this country been eminent in that profeſſion?

The endowments of ſchools and colleges have neceſſarily diminiſhed more or leſs the neceſſity of application in the teachers. Their ſubſiſtence, ſo far as it ariſes from their ſalaries, is evidently derived from a fund altogether independent of their ſucceſs and reputation in their particular profeſſions.

In ſome univerſities the ſalary makes but a part, and frequently but a ſmall part of the emoluments of the teacher, of which the greater part ariſes from the honoraries or fees of his pupils. The neceſſity of application, though always more or leſs diminiſhed, is not in this caſe entirely taken away. Reputation in his profeſſion is ſtill of ſome importance to him, and he ſtill has ſome dependency upon the affection, gratitude, and favourable report of thoſe who have attended upon his inſtructions; and theſe favourable ſentiments he is likely to gain in no way ſo well as by deſerving them, that is, by the abilities and diligence with which he diſcharges every part of his duty.

In other univerſities the teacher is prohibited from receiving any honorary or fee from his pupils,

pupils, and his ſalary conſtitutes the whole of the revenue which he derives from his office. His intereſt is, in this caſe, ſet as directly in oppoſition to his duty as it is poſſible to ſet it. It is the intereſt of every man to live as much at his eaſe as he can; and if his emoluments are to be preciſely the ſame, whether he does, or does not perform ſome very laborious duty, it is certainly his intereſt, at leaſt as intereſt is vulgarly underſtood, either to neglect it altogether, or, if he is ſubject to ſome authority which will not ſuffer him to do this, to perform it in as careleſs and ſlovenly a manner as that authority will permit. If he is naturally active and a lover of labour, it is his intereſt to employ that activity in any way, from which he can derive ſome advantage, rather than in the performance of his duty, from which he can derive none.

If the authority to which he is ſubject reſides in the body corporate, the college, or univerſity, of which he himſelf is a member, and in which the greater part of the other members are, like himſelf, perſons who either are, or ought to be teachers; they are likely to make a common cauſe, to be all very indulgent to one another, and every man to conſent that his neighbour may neglect his duty, provided he himſelf is allowed to neglect his own. In the univerſity of Oxford, the greater part of the public profeſſors have, for theſe many years, given up altogether even the pretence of teaching.

If the authority to which he is ſubject reſides, not ſo much in the body corporate of which he

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is a member, as in ſome other extraneous perſons, in the biſhop of the dioceſe for example; in the governor of the province; or perhaps, in ſome miniſter of ſtate; it is not indeed in this caſe very likely that he will be ſuffered to neglect his duty altogether. All that ſuch ſuperiors, however, can force him to do, is to attend upon his pupils a certain number of hours, that is, to give a certain number of lectures in the week or in the year. What thoſe lectures ſhall be, muſt ſtill depend upon the diligence of the teacher; and that diligence is likely to be proportioned to the motives which he has for exerting it. An extraneous juriſdiction of this kind, beſides, is liable to be exerciſed both ignorantly and capriciouſly. In its nature it is arbitrary and diſcretionary, and the perſons who exerciſe it, neither attending upon the lectures of the teacher themſelves, nor perhaps underſtanding the ſciences which it is his buſineſs to teach, are ſeldom capable of exerciſing it with judgment. From the inſolence of office too they are frequently indifferent how they exerciſe it, and are very apt to cenſure or deprive him of his office wantonly, and without any juſt cauſe. The perſon ſubject to ſuch juriſdiction is neceſſarily degraded by it, and, inſtead of being one of the moſt reſpectable, is rendered one of the meaneſt and moſt contemptible perſons in the ſociety. It is by powerful protection only that he can effectually guard himſelf againſt the bad uſage to which he is at all times expoſed; and this protection he is moſt likely to gain, not by ability

or

or diligence in his profeſſion, but by obſequiouſneſs to the will of his ſuperiors, and by being ready, at all times, to ſacrifice to that will the rights, the intereſt, and the honour of the body corporate of which he is a member. Whoever has attended for any conſiderable time to the adminiſtration of a French univerſity, muſt have had occaſion to remark the effects which naturally reſult from an arbitrary and extraneous juriſdiction of this kind.

Whatever forces a certain number of ſtudents to any college or univerſity, independent of the merit or reputation of the teachers, tends more or leſs to diminiſh the neceſſity of that merit or reputation.

The privileges of graduates in arts, in law, phyſic and divinity, when they can be obtained only by reſiding a certain number of years in certain univerſities, neceſſarily force a certain number of ſtudents to ſuch univerſities, independent of the merit or reputation of the teachers. The privileges of graduates are a ſort of ſtatutes of apprenticeſhip, which have contributed to the improvement of education, juſt as the other ſtatutes of apprenticeſhip have to that of arts and manufactures.

The charitable foundations of ſcholarſhips, exhibitions, burſaries, &c. neceſſarily attach a certain number of ſtudents to certain colleges, independent altogether of the merit of thoſe particular colleges. Were the ſtudents upon ſuch charitable foundations left free to chuſe what college they liked beſt, ſuch liberty might

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perhaps contribute to excite ſome emulation among different colleges. A regulation, on the contrary, which prohibited even the independent members of every particular college from leaving it, and going to any other, without leave firſt aſked and obtained of that which they meant to abandon, would tend very much to extinguiſh that emulation.

If in each college the tutor or teacher, who was to inſtruct each ſtudent in all arts and ſciences, ſhould not be voluntarily choſen by the ſtudent, but appointed by the head of the college; and if, in caſe of neglect, inability, or bad uſage, the ſtudent ſhould not be allowed to change him for another, without leave firſt aſked and obtained; ſuch a regulation would not only tend very much to extinguiſh all emulation among the different tutors of the ſame college, but to diminiſh very much in all of them the neceſſity of diligence and of attention to their reſpective pupils. Such teachers, though very well paid by their ſtudents, might be as much diſpoſed to neglect them, as thoſe who are not paid by them at all, or who have no other recompence but their ſalary.

If the teacher happens to be a man of ſenſe, it muſt be an unpleaſant thing to him to be conſcious, while he is lecturing his ſtudents, that he is either ſpeaking or reading nonſenſe, or what is very little better than nonſenſe. It muſt too be unpleaſant to him to obſerve that the greater part of his ſtudents deſert his lectures; or perhaps attend upon them with plain enough marks of

of neglect, contempt, and derision. If he is obliged, therefore, to give a certain number of lectures, these motives alone, without any other interest, might dispose him to take some pains to give tolerably good ones. Several different expedients, however, may be fallen upon, which will effectually blunt the edge of all those incitements to diligence. The teacher, instead of explaining to his pupils himself the science in which he proposes to instruct them, may read some book upon it; and if this book is written in a foreign and dead language, by interpreting it to them into their own; or, what would give him still less trouble, by making them interpret it to him, and by now and then making an occasional remark upon it, he may flatter himself that he is giving a lecture. The slightest degree of knowledge and application will enable him to do this, without exposing himself to contempt or derision, or saying any thing that is really foolish, absurd, or ridiculous. The discipline of the college, at the same time, may enable him to force all his pupils to the most regular attendance upon this sham-lecture, and to maintain the most decent and respectful behaviour during the whole time of the performance.

The discipline of colleges and universities is in general contrived, not for the benefit of the students, but for the interest, or more properly speaking, for the ease of the masters. Its object is, in all cases, to maintain the authority of the master, and whether he neglects or performs his duty, to oblige the students in all cases to behave to

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to him as if he performed it with the greateſt diligence and ability. It ſeems to preſume perfect wiſdom and virtue in the one order, and the greateſt weakneſs and folly in the other. Where the maſters, however, really perform their duty, there are no examples, I believe, that the greater part of the ſtudents ever neglect theirs. No diſcipline is ever requiſite to force attendance upon lectures which are really worth the attending, as is well known wherever any ſuch lectures are given. Force and reſtraint may, no doubt, be in ſome degree requiſite in order to oblige children, or very young boys, to attend to thoſe parts of education which it is thought neceſſary for them to acquire during that early period of life; but after twelve or thirteen years of age, provided the maſter does his duty, force or reſtraint can ſcarce ever be neceſſary to carry on any part of education. Such is the generoſity of the greater part of young men, that, ſo far from being diſpoſed to neglect or deſpiſe the inſtructions of their maſter, provided he ſhows ſome ſerious intention of being of uſe to them, they are generally inclined to pardon a great deal of incorrectneſs in the performance of his duty, and ſometimes even to conceal from the public a good deal of groſs negligence.

Thoſe parts of education, it is to be obſerved, for the teaching of which there are no public inſtitutions, are generally the beſt taught. When a young man goes to a fencing or a dancing ſchool, he does not indeed always learn to fence or to dance very well; but he ſeldom fails of learning to fence

fence or to dance. The good effects of the riding ſchool are not commonly ſo evident. The expence of a riding ſchool is ſo great, that in moſt places it is a public inſtitution. The three moſt eſſential parts of literary education, to read, write, and account, it ſtill continues to be more common to acquire in private than in public ſchools; and it very ſeldom happens that any body fails of acquiring them to the degree in which it is neceſſary to acquire them.

In England the public ſchools are much leſs corrupted than the univerſities. In the ſchools the youth are taught, or at leaſt may be taught, Greek and Latin; that is, every thing which the maſters pretend to teach, or which, it is expected, they ſhould teach. In the univerſities the youth neither are taught, nor always can find any proper means of being taught, the ſciences, which it is the buſineſs of thoſe incorporated bodies to teach. The reward of the ſchoolmaſter in moſt caſes depends principally, in ſome caſes almoſt entirely, upon the fees or honoraries of his ſcholars. Schools have no excluſive privileges. In order to obtain the honours of graduation, it is not neceſſary that a perſon ſhould bring a certificate of his having ſtudied a certain number of years at a public ſchool. If upon examination he appears to underſtand what is taught there, no queſtions are aſked about the place where he learnt it.

The parts of education which are commonly taught in univerſities, it may, perhaps, be ſaid are not very well taught. But had it not been for thoſe inſtitutions they would not have been commonly

commonly taught at all, and both the individual and the public would have ſuffered a good deal from the want of thoſe important parts of education.

The preſent univerſities of Europe were originally, the greater part of them, eccleſiaſtical corporations; inſtituted for the education of churchmen. They were founded by the authority of the Pope, and were ſo entirely under his immediate protection, that their members, whether maſters or ſtudents, had all of them what was then called the benefit of clergy, that is, were exempted from the civil juriſdiction of the countries in which their reſpective univerſities were ſituated, and were amenable only to the eccleſiaſtical tribunals. What was taught in the greater part of thoſe univerſities was ſuitable to the end of their inſtitution, either theology, or ſomething that was merely preparatory to theology.

When chriſtianity was firſt eſtabliſhed by law, a corrupted Latin had become the common language of all the weſtern parts of Europe. The ſervice of the church accordingly, and the tranſlation of the Bible which was read in churches, were both in that corrupted Latin; that is, in the common language of the country. After the irruption of the barbarous nation who overturned the Roman empire, Latin gradually ceaſed to be the language of any part of Europe. But the reverence of the people naturally preſerves the eſtabliſhed forms and ceremonies of religion, long after the circumſtances which firſt introduced and rendered them reaſonable are no more. Though

Latin,

Latin, therefore, was no longer underſtood any where by the great body of the people, the whole ſervice of the church ſtill continued to be performed in that language. Two different languages were thus eſtabliſhed in Europe, in the ſame manner as in ancient Egypt; a language of the prieſts, and a language of the people; a ſacred and a profane; a learned and an unlearned language. But it was neceſſary that the prieſts ſhould underſtand ſomething of that ſacred and learned language in which they were to officiate; and the ſtudy of the Latin language therefore made, from the beginning, an eſſential part of the univerſity education.

It was not ſo with that either of the Greek, or of the Hebrew language. The infallible decrees of the church had pronounced the Latin tranſlation of the Bible, commonly called the Latin Vulgate, to have been equally dictated by divine inſpiration, and therefore of equal authority with the Greek and Hebrew originals. The knowledge of thoſe two languages, therefore, not being indiſpenſably requiſite to a churchman, the ſtudy of them did not for a long time make a neceſſary part of the common courſe of univerſity education. There are ſome Spaniſh univerſities, I am aſſured, in which the ſtudy of the Greek language has never yet made any part of that courſe. The firſt reformers found the Greek text of the New Teſtament, and even the Hebrew text of the Old, more favourable to their opinions, than the Vulgate tranſlation, which, as might naturally be ſuppoſed, had been gradually

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accommodated to ſupport the doctrines of the catholic church. They ſet themſelves, therefore, to expoſe the many errors of that tranſlation, which the Roman catholic clergy were thus put under the neceſſity of defending or explaining. But this could not well be done without ſome knowledge of the original languages, of which the ſtudy was therefore gradually introduced into the greater part of univerſities; both of thoſe which embraced, and of thoſe which rejected, the doctrines of the Reformation. The Greek language was connected with every part of that claſſical learning, which, though at firſt principally cultivated by Catholics and Italians, happened to come into faſhion much about the ſame time that the doctrines of the Reformation were ſet on foot. In the greater part of univerſities, therefore, that language was taught previous to the ſtudy of philoſophy, and as ſoon as the ſtudent had made ſome progreſs in the Latin. The Hebrew language having no connection with claſſical learning, and, except the Holy Scriptures, being the language of not a ſingle book in any eſteem, the ſtudy of it did not commonly commence till after that of philoſophy, and when the ſtudent had entered upon the ſtudy of theology.

Originally the firſt rudiments both of the Greek and Latin languages were taught in univerſities, and in ſome univerſities they ſtill continue to be ſo. In others it is expected that the ſtudent ſhould have previouſly acquired at leaſt the rudiments of one or both of thoſe languages,

languages, of which the ſtudy continues to make every where a very conſiderable part of univerſity education. CHAP. I.

The ancient Greek philoſophy was divided into three great branches; phyſics, or natural philoſophy; ethics, or moral philoſophy; and logic. This general diviſion ſeems perfectly agreeable to the nature of things.

The great phenomena of nature, the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, eclipſes, comets; thunder, lightning, and other extraordinary meteors; the generation, the life, growth, and diſſolution of plants and animals; are objects which, as they neceſſarily excite the wonder, ſo they naturally call forth the curioſity, of mankind to enquire into their cauſes. Superſtition firſt attempted to ſatisfy this curioſity, by referring all thoſe wonderful appearances to the immediate agency of the gods. Philoſophy afterwards endeavoured to account for them, from more familiar cauſes, or from ſuch as mankind were better acquainted with, than the agency of the gods. As thoſe great phenomena are the firſt objects of human curioſity, ſo the ſcience which pretends to explain them muſt naturally have been the firſt branch of philoſophy that was cultivated. The firſt philoſophers, accordingly, of whom hiſtory has preſerved any account, appear to have been natural philoſophers.

In every age and country of the world men muſt have attended to the characters, deſigns, and actions of one another, and many reputable rules and maxims for the conduct of human life,

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muſt have been laid down and approved of by common conſent. As ſoon as writing came into faſhion, wiſe men, or thoſe who fancied themſelves ſuch, would naturally endeavour to increaſe the number of thoſe eſtabliſhed and reſpected maxims, and to expreſs their own ſenſe of what was either proper or improper conduct, ſometimes in the more artificial form of apologues, like what are called the fables of Æſop; and ſometimes in the more ſimple one of apophthegms, or wiſe ſayings, like the Proverbs of Solomon, the verſes of Theognis and Phocyllides, and ſome part of the works of Heſiod. They might continue in this manner for a long time merely to multiply the number of thoſe maxims of prudence and morality, without even attempting to arrange them in any very diſtinct or methodical order, much leſs to connect them together by one or more general principles, from which they were all deducible, like effects from their natural cauſes. The beauty of a ſyſtematical arrangement of different obſervations connected by a few common principles, was firſt ſeen in the rude eſſays of thoſe ancient times towards a ſyſtem of natural philoſophy. Something of the ſame kind was afterwards attempted in morals. The maxims of common life were arranged in ſome methodical order, and connected together by a few common principles, in the ſame manner as they had attempted to arrange and connect the phenomena of nature. The ſcience which pretends to inveſtigate and explain thoſe connecting principles, is what is properly called moral philoſophy.

Different

CHAP. I.

Different authors gave different ſyſtems both of natural and moral philoſophy. But the arguments by which they ſupported thoſe different ſyſtems, far from being always demonſtrations, were frequently at beſt but very ſlender probabilities, and ſometimes mere ſophiſms, which had no other foundation but the inaccuracy and ambiguity of common language. Speculative ſyſtems have in all ages of the world been adopted for reaſons too frivolous to have determined the judgment of any man of common ſenſe, in a matter of the ſmalleſt pecuniary intereſt. Groſs ſophiſtry has ſcarce ever had any influence upon the opinions of mankind, except in matters of philoſophy and ſpeculation; and in theſe it has frequently had the greateſt. The patrons of each ſyſtem of natural and moral philoſophy naturally endeavoured to expoſe the weakneſs of the arguments adduced to ſupport the ſyſtems which were oppoſite to their own. In examining thoſe arguments, they were neceſſarily led to conſider the difference between a probable and a demonſtrative argument, between a fallacious and a concluſive one; and Logic, or the ſcience of the general principles of good and bad reaſoning, neceſſarily aroſe out of the obſervations which a ſcrutiny of this kind gave occaſion to. Though in its origin, poſterior both to phyſics and to ethics, it was commonly taught, not indeed in all, but in the greater part of the ancient ſchools of philoſophy, previouſly to either of thoſe ſciences. The ſtudent, it ſeems to have been thought, ought to underſtand well the difference

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between good and bad reaſoning, before he was led to reaſon upon ſubjects of ſo great importance.

This ancient diviſion of philoſophy into three parts was in the greater part of the univerſities of Europe, changed for another into five.

In the ancient philoſophy, whatever was taught concerning the nature either of the human mind or of the Deity, made a part of the ſyſtem of phyſics. Thoſe beings, in whatever their eſſence might be ſuppoſed to conſiſt, were parts of the great ſyſtem of the univerſe, and parts too productive of the moſt important effects. Whatever human reaſon could either conclude, or conjecture concerning them, made, as it were, two chapters, though no doubt two very important ones, of the ſcience which pretended to give an account of the origin and revolutions of the great ſyſtem of the univerſe. But in the univerſities of Europe, where philoſophy was taught only as ſubſervient to theology, it was natural to dwell longer upon theſe two chapters than upon any other of the ſcience. They were gradually more and more extended, and were divided into many inferior chapters, till at laſt the doctrine of ſpirits, of which ſo little can be known, came to take up as much room in the ſyſtem of philoſophy as the doctrine of bodies, of which ſo much can be known. The doctrines concerning thoſe two ſubjects were conſidered as making two diſtinct ſciences. What are called Metaphyſics or Pneumatics were ſet in oppoſition to Phyſics, and were cultivated not only as the more ſublime, but,

but, for the purpoſe of a particular profeſſion, as the more uſeful ſcience of the two. The proper ſubject of experiment and obſervation, a ſubject in which a careful attention is capable of making ſo many uſeful diſcoveries, was almoſt entirely neglected. The ſubject in which, after a few very ſimple and almoſt obvious truths, the moſt careful attention can diſcover nothing but obſcurity and uncertainty, and can conſequently produce nothing but ſubtleties and ſophiſms, was greatly cultivated. CHAP. I.

When thoſe two ſciences had thus been ſet in oppoſition to one another, the compariſon between them naturally gave birth to a third, to what was called Ontology, or the ſcience which treated of the qualities and attributes which were common to both the ſubjects of the other two ſciences. But if ſubtleties and ſophiſms compoſed the greater part of the Metaphyſics or Pneumatics of the ſchools, they compoſed the whole of this cobweb ſcience of Ontology, which was likewiſe ſometimes called Metaphyſics.

Wherein conſiſted the happineſs and perfection of a man, conſidered not only as an individual, but as the member of a family, of a ſtate, and of the great ſociety of mankind, was the object which the ancient moral philoſophy propoſed to inveſtigate. In that philoſophy the duties of human life were treated of as ſubſervient to the happineſs and perfection of human life. But when moral, as well as natural philoſophy, came to be taught only as ſubſervient to theology, the duties of human life were treated of as chiefly

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ſubſervient to the happineſs of a life to come. In the ancient philoſophy the perfection of virtue was repreſented as neceſſarily productive, to the perſon who poſſeſſed it, of the moſt perfect happineſs in this life. In the modern philoſophy it was frequently repreſented as generally, or rather as almoſt always inconſiſtent with any degree of happineſs in this life; and heaven was to be earned only by penance and mortification, by the auſterities and abaſement of a monk; not by the liberal, generous, and ſpirited conduct of a man. Caſuiſtry and an aſcetic morality made up, in moſt caſes, the greater part of the moral philoſophy of the ſchools. By far the moſt important of all the different branches of philoſophy, became in this manner by far the moſt corrupted.

Such, therefore, was the common courſe of philoſophical education in the greater part of the univerſities in Europe. Logic was taught firſt: Ontology came in the ſecond place: Pneumatology, comprehending the doctrine concerning the nature of the human ſoul and of the Deity, in the third: In the fourth followed a debaſed ſyſtem of moral philoſophy, which was conſidered as immediately connected with the doctrines of Pneumatology, with the immortality of the human ſoul, and with the rewards and puniſhments which, from the juſtice of the Deity, were to be expected in a life to come: A ſhort and ſuperficial ſyſtem of Phyſics uſually concluded the courſe.

The alterations which the univerſities of Europe thus introduced into the ancient courſe of philoſophy,

philoſophy, were all meant for the education of ecclefiaſtics, and to render it a more proper introduction to the ſtudy of theology. But the additional quantity of ſubtlety and ſophiſtry; the caſuiſtry and the aſcetic morality which thoſe alterations introduced into it, certainly did not render it more proper for the education of gentlemen or men of the world, or more likely either to improve the underſtanding, or to mend the heart. CHAP. I.

This courſe of philoſophy is what ſtill continues to be taught in the greater part of the univerſities of Europe; with more or leſs diligence, according as the conſtitution of each particular univerſity happens to render diligence more or leſs neceſſary to the teachers. In ſome of the richeſt and beſt endowed univerſities, the tutors content themſelves with teaching a few unconnected ſhreds and parcels of this corrupted courſe; and even theſe they commonly teach very negligently and ſuperficially.

The improvements which, in modern times, have been made in ſeveral different branches of philoſophy, have not, the greater part of them, been made in univerſities; though ſome no doubt have. The greater part of univerſities have not even been very forward to adopt thoſe improvements, after they were made; and ſeveral of thoſe learned ſocieties have choſen to remain, for a long time, the ſanctuaries in which exploded ſyſtems and obſolete prejudices found ſhelter and protection, after they had been hunted out of every other corner of the world. In general, the richeſt and beſt endowed univerſities have been

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been the ſloweſt in adopting thoſe improvements, and the moſt averſe to permit any conſiderable change in the eſtabliſhed plan of education. Thoſe improvements were more eaſily introduced into ſome of the poorer univerſities, in which the teachers, depending upon their reputation for the greater part of their ſubſiſtence, were obliged to pay more attention to the current opinions of the world.

But though the public ſchools and univerſities of Europe were originally intended only for the education of a particular profeſſion, that of churchmen; and though they were not always very diligent in inſtructing their pupils even in the ſciences which were ſuppoſed neceſſary for that profeſſion, yet they gradually drew to themſelves the education of almoſt all other people, particularly of almoſt all gentlemen and men of fortune. No better method, it ſeems, could be fallen upon of ſpending, with any advantage, the long interval between infancy and that period of life at which men begin to apply in good earneſt to the real buſineſs of the world, the buſineſs which is to employ them during the remainder of their days. The greater part of what is taught in ſchools and univerſities, however, does not ſeem to be the moſt proper preparation for that buſineſs.

In England, it becomes every day more and more the cuſtom to ſend young people to travel in foreign countries immediately upon their leaving ſchool, and without ſending them to any univerſity. Our young people, it is ſaid, generally return

return home much improved by their travels. A young man who goes abroad at ſeventeen or eighteen, and returns home at one and twenty, returns three or four years older than he was when he went abroad; and at that age it is very difficult not to improve a good deal in three or four years. In the courſe of his travels, he generally acquires ſome knowledge of one or two foreign languages; a knowledge, however, which is ſeldom ſufficient to enable him either to ſpeak or write them with propriety. In other reſpects, he commonly returns home more conceited, more unprincipled, more diſſipated, and more incapable of any ſerious application either to ſtudy or to buſineſs, than he could well have become in ſo ſhort a time, had he lived at home. By travelling ſo very young, by ſpending in the moſt frivolous diſſipation the moſt precious years of his life, at a diſtance from the inſpection and controul of his parents and relations, every uſeful habit, which the earlier parts of his education might have had ſome tendency to form in him, inſtead of being rivetted and confirmed, is almoſt neceſſarily either weakened or effaced. Nothing but the diſcredit into which the univerſities are allowing themſelves to fall, could ever have brought into repute ſo very abſurd a practice as that of travelling at this early period of life. By ſending his ſon abroad, a father delivers himſelf, at leaſt for ſome time, from ſo diſagreeable an object as that of a ſon unemployed, neglected, and going to ruin before his eyes.

Such

Such have been the effects of ſome of the modern inſtitutions for education.

Different plans and different inſtitutions for education ſeem to have taken place in other ages and nations.

In the republics of ancient Greece, every free citizen was inſtructed, under the direction of the public magiſtrate, in gymnaſtic exerciſes and in muſic. By gymnaſtic exerciſes it was intended to harden his body, to ſharpen his courage, and to prepare him for the fatigues and dangers of war; and as the Greek militia was, by all accounts, one of the beſt that ever was in the world, this part of their public education muſt have anſwered completely the purpoſe for which it was intended. By the other part, muſic, it was propoſed, at leaſt by the philoſophers and hiſtorians who have given us an account of thoſe inſtitutions, to humanize the mind, to ſoften the temper, and to diſpoſe it for performing all the ſocial and moral duties both of public and private life.

In ancient Rome the exerciſes of the Campus Martius anſwered the ſame purpoſe as thoſe of the Gymnazium in ancient Greece, and they ſeem to have anſwered it equally well. But among the Romans there was nothing which correſponded to the muſical education of the Greeks. The morals of the Romans, however, both in private and public life, ſeem to have been, not only equal, but, upon the whole, a good deal ſuperior to thoſe of the Greeks. That they were ſuperior in private life, we have the expreſs teſtimony of Polybius and of Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, two authors

authors well acquainted with both nations; and the whole tenor of the Greek and Roman hiſtory bears witneſs to the ſuperiority of the public morals of the Romans. The good temper and moderation of contending factions ſeems to be the moſt eſſential circumſtance in the public morals of a free people. But the factions of the Greeks were almoſt always violent and ſanguinary; whereas, till the time of the Gracchi, no blood had ever been ſhed in any Roman faction; and from the time of the Gracchi the Roman republic may be conſidered as in reality diſſolved. Notwithſtanding, therefore, the very reſpectable authority of Plato, Ariſtotle, and Polybius, and notwithſtanding the very ingenius reaſons by which Mr. Monteſquieu endeavours to ſupport that authority, it ſeems probable that the muſical education of the Greeks had no great effect in mending their morals, ſince, without any ſuch education, thoſe of the Romans were upon the whole ſuperior. The reſpect of thoſe ancient ſages for the inſtitutions of their anceſtors, had probably diſpoſed them to find much political wiſdom in what was, perhaps, merely an ancient cuſtom, continued, without interruption, from the earlieſt period of thoſe ſocieties, to the times in which they had arrived at a conſiderable degree of refinement. Muſic and dancing are the great amuſements of almoſt all barbarous nations, and the great accompliſhments which are ſuppoſed to fit any man for entertaining his ſociety. It is ſo at this day among the negroes on the coaſt of Africa. It was ſo among the

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ancient Celtes, among the ancient Scandinavians, and, as we may learn from Homer, among the ancient Greeks in the times preceding the Trojan war. When the Greek tribes had formed themſelves into little republics, it was natural that the ſtudy of thoſe accompliſhments ſhould, for a long time, make a part of the public and common education of the people.

The maſters who inſtructed the young people either in muſic or in military exerciſes, do not ſeem to have been paid, or even appointed by the ſtate, either in Rome or even in Athens, the Greek republic of whoſe laws and cuſtoms we are the beſt informed. The ſtate required that every free citizen ſhould fit himſelf for defending it in war, and ſhould, upon that account, learn his military exerciſes. But it left him to learn them of ſuch maſters as he could find, and it ſeems to have advanced nothing for this purpoſe, but a public field or place of exerciſe, in which he ſhould practice and perform them.

In the early ages both of the Greek and Roman republics, the other parts of education ſeem to have conſiſted in learning to read, write, and account according to the arithmetic of the times. Theſe accompliſhments the richer citizens ſeem frequently to have acquired at home, by the aſſiſtance of ſome domeſtic pedagogue, who was generally, either a ſlave, or a freed-man; and the poorer citizens, in the ſchools of ſuch maſters as made a trade of teaching for hire. Such parts of education, however, were abandoned altogether to the care of the parents or

guardians of each individual. It does not appear that the ſtate ever aſſumed any inſpection or direction of them. By a law of Solon, indeed, the children were acquitted from maintaining thoſe parents in their old age, who had neglected to inſtruct them in ſome profitable trade or buſineſs.

In the progreſs of refinement, when philoſophy and rhetoric came into faſhion, the better ſort of people uſed to ſend their children to the ſchools of philoſophers and rhetoricians, in order to be inſtructed in theſe faſhionable ſciences. But thoſe ſchools were not ſupported by the public. They were for a long time barely tolerated by it. The demand for philoſophy and rhetoric was for a long time ſo ſmall, that the firſt profeſſed teachers of either could not find conſtant employment in any one city, but were obliged to travel about from place to place. In this manner lived Zeno of Elea, Protagoras, Gorgias, Hippias, and many others. As the demand increaſed, the ſchools both of philoſophy and rhetoric became ſtationary; firſt in Athens, and afterwards in ſeveral other cities. The ſtate, however, ſeems never to have encouraged them further than by aſſigning to ſome of them a particular place to teach in, which was ſometimes done too by private donors. The ſtate ſeems to have aſſigned the Academy to Plato, the Lyceum to Ariſtotle, and the Portico to Zeno of Citta, the founder of the Stoics. But Epicurus bequeathed his gardens to his own ſchool. Till about the time of Marcus Antoninus, however, no teacher appears

appears to have had any ſalary from the public; or to have had any other emoluments, but what aroſe from the honoraries or fees of his ſcholars. The bounty which that philoſophical emperor, as we learn from Lucian, beſtowed upon one of the teachers of philoſophy, probably laſted no longer than his own life. There was nothing equivalent to the privileges of graduation, and to have attended any of thoſe ſchools was not neceſſary, in order to be permitted to practice any particular trade or profeſſion. If the opinion of their own utility could not draw ſcholars to them, the law neither forced any body to go to them, nor rewarded any body for having gone to them. The teachers had no juriſdiction over their pupils, nor any other authority beſides that natural authority, which ſuperior virtue and abilities never fail to procure from young people towards thoſe who are entruſted with any part of their education.

At Rome, the ſtudy of the civil law made a part of the education, not of the greater part of the citizens, but of ſome particular families. The young people, however, who wiſhed to acquire knowledge in the law, had no public ſchool to go to, and had no other method of ſtudying it, than by frequenting the company of ſuch of their relations and friends, as were ſuppoſed to underſtand it. It is perhaps worth while to remark, that though the laws of the twelve tables were, many of them, copied from thoſe of ſome ancient Greek republics, yet law never ſeems to have grown up to be a ſcience in any republic

republic of ancient Greece. In Rome it became a ſcience very early, and gave a conſiderable degree of illuſtration to thoſe citizens who had the reputation of underſtanding it. In the republics of ancient Greece, particularly in Athens, the ordinary courts of juſtice conſiſted of numerous, and therefore diſorderly, bodies of people, who frequently decided almoſt at random, or as clamour, faction, and party ſpirit happened to determine. The ignominy of an unjuſt deciſion, when it was to be divided among five hundred, a thouſand, or fifteen hundred people (for ſome of their courts were ſo very numerous), could not fall very heavy upon any individual. At Rome, on the contrary, the principal courts of juſtice conſiſted either of a ſingle judge, or of a ſmall number of judges, whoſe characters, eſpecially as they deliberated always in public, could not fail to be very much affected by any raſh or unjuſt deciſion. In doubtful caſes, ſuch courts, from their anxiety to avoid blame, would naturally endeavour to ſhelter themſelves under the example, or precedent, of the judges who had ſat before them, either in the ſame, or in ſome other court. This attention to practice and precedent neceſſarily formed the Roman law into that regular and orderly ſyſtem in which it has been delivered down to us; and the like attention has had the like effects upon the laws of every other country where ſuch attention has taken place. The ſuperiority of character in the Romans over that of the Greeks, ſo much remarked by Polybius and Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus,

naſſus, was probably more owing to the better conſtitution of their courts of juſtice, than to any of the circumſtances to which thoſe authors aſcribe it. The Romans are ſaid to have been particularly diſtinguiſhed for their ſuperior reſpect to an oath. But the people who were accuſtomed to make oath only before ſome diligent and well-informed court of juſtice, would naturally be much more attentive to what they ſwore, than they who were accuſtomed to do the ſame thing before mobbiſh and diſorderly aſſemblies.

The abilities, both civil and military, of the Greeks and Romans, will readily be allowed to have been, at leaſt, equal to thoſe of any modern nation. Our prejudice is perhaps rather to overrate them. But except in what related to military exerciſes, the ſtate ſeems to have been at no pains to form thoſe great abilities: for I cannot be induced to believe, that the muſical education of the Greeks could be of much conſequence in forming them. Maſters, however, had been found, it ſeems, for inſtructing the better ſort of people among thoſe nations in every art and ſcience in which the circumſtances of their ſociety rendered it neceſſary or convenient for them to be inſtructed. The demand for ſuch inſtruction produced, what it always produces, the talent for giving it; and the emulation which an unreſtrained competition never fails to excite, appears to have brought that talent to a very high degree of perfection. In the attention which the ancient philoſophers excited, in the empire which they acquired over the opinions and principles of their

their auditors, in the faculty which they poſſeſſed of giving a certain tone and character to the conduct and converſation of thoſe auditors; they appear to have been much ſuperior to any modern teachers. In modern times, the diligence of public teachers is more or leſs corrupted by the circumſtances, which render them more or leſs independent of their ſucceſs and reputation in their particular profeſſions. Their ſalaries too put the private teacher, who would pretend to come into competition with them, in the ſame ſtate with a merchant who attempts to trade without a bounty, in competition with thoſe who trade with a conſiderable one. If he ſells his goods at nearly the ſame price, he cannot have the ſame profit; and poverty and beggary at leaſt, if not bankruptcy and ruin, will infallibly be his lot. If he attempts to ſell them much dearer, he is likely to have ſo few cuſtomers that his circumſtances will not be much mended. The privileges of graduation, beſides, are in many countries neceſſary, or at leaſt extremely convenient to moſt men of learned profeſſions; that is, to the far greater part of thoſe who have occaſion for a learned education. But thoſe privileges can be obtained only by attending the lectures of the public teachers. The moſt careful attendance upon the ableſt inſtructions of any private teacher, cannot always give any title to demand them. It is from theſe different cauſes that the private teacher of any of the ſciences which are commonly taught in univerſities, is in

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modern times generally conſidered as in the very loweſt order of men of letters. A man of real abilities can ſcarce find out a more humiliating or a more unprofitable employment to turn them to. The endowments of ſchools and colleges have, in this manner, not only corrupted the diligence of public teachers, but have rendered it almoſt impoſſible to have any good private ones.

Were there no public inſtitutions for education, no ſyſtem, no ſcience would be taught for which there was not ſome demand; or which the circumſtances of the times did not render it either neceſſary, or convenient, or at leaſt faſhionable, to learn. A private teacher could never find his account in teaching, either an exploded and antiquated ſyſtem of a ſcience acknowledged to be uſeful, or a ſcience univerſally believed to be a mere uſeleſs and pedantic heap of ſophiſtry and nonſenſe. Such ſyſtems, ſuch ſciences, can ſubſiſt no where, but in thoſe incorporated ſocieties for education whoſe proſperity and revenue are in a great meaſure independent of their reputation, and altogether independent of their induſtry. Were there no public inſtitutions for education, a gentleman, after going through, with application and abilities, the moſt complete courſe of education which the circumſtances of the times were ſuppoſed to afford, could not come into the world completely ignorant of every thing which is the common ſubject of converſation among gentlemen and men of the world.

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There are no public inſtitutions for the education of women, and there is accordingly nothing uſeleſs, abſurd, or fantaſtical in the common courſe of their education. They are taught what their parents or guardians judge it neceſſary or uſeful for them to learn; and they are taught nothing elſe. Every part of their education tends evidently to ſome uſeful purpoſe; either to improve the natural attractions of their perſon, or to form their mind to reſerve, to modeſty, to chaſtity, and to œconomy; to render them both likely to become the miſtreſſes of a family, and to behave properly when they have become ſuch. In every part of her life a woman feels ſome conveniency or advantage from every part of her education. It ſeldom happens that a man, in any part of his life, derives any conveniency or advantage from ſome of the moſt laborious and troubleſome parts of his education.

Ought the public, therefore, to give no attention, it may be aſked, to the education of the people? Or if it ought to give any, what are the different parts of education which it ought to attend to in the different orders of the people? and in what manner ought it to attend to them?

In ſome caſes the ſtate of the ſociety neceſſarily places the greater part of individuals in ſuch ſituations as naturally form in them, without any attention of government, almoſt all the abilities and virtues which that ſtate requires, or perhaps can admit of. In other caſes the ſtate of the ſociety does not place the greater part of individuals in ſuch ſituations, and ſome attention of

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government is neceſſary in order to prevent the almoſt entire corruption and degeneracy of the great body of the people.

In the progreſs of the diviſion of labour, the employment of the far greater part of thoſe who live by labour, that is, of the great body of the people, comes to be confined to a few very ſimple operations; frequently to one or two. But the underſtandings of the greater part of men are neceſſarily formed by their ordinary employments. The man whoſe whole life is ſpent in performing a few ſimple operations, of which the effects too are, perhaps, always the ſame, or very nearly the ſame, has no occaſion to exert his underſtanding, or to exerciſe his invention in finding out expedients for removing difficulties which never occur. He naturally loſes, therefore, the habit of ſuch exertion, and generally becomes as ſtupid and ignorant as it is poſſible for a human creature to become. The torpor of his mind renders him, not only incapable of reliſhing or bearing a part in any rational converſation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender ſentiment, and conſequently of forming any juſt judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life. Of the great and extenſive intereſts of his country he is altogether incapable of judging; and unleſs very particular pains have been taken to render him otherwiſe, he is equally incapable of defending his country in war. The uniformity of his ſtationary life naturally corrupts the courage of his mind, and makes him regard with abhorrence the irregular, uncertain,

uncertain, and adventurous life of a ſoldier. It corrupts even the activity of his body, and renders him incapable of exerting his ſtrength with vigour and perſeverance, in any other employment than that to which he has been bred. His dexterity at his own particular trade ſeems, in this manner, to be acquired at the expence of his intellectual, ſocial, and martial virtues. But in every improved and civilized ſociety this is the ſtate into which the labouring poor, that is, the great body of the people, muſt neceſſarily fall, unleſs government takes ſome pains to prevent it.

It is otherwiſe in the barbarous ſocieties, as they are commonly called, of hunters, of ſhepherds, and even of huſbandmen in that rude ſtate of huſbandry which precedes the improvement of manufactures, and the extenſion of foreign commerce. In ſuch ſocieties the varied occupations of every man oblige every man to exert his capacity, and to invent expedients for removing difficulties which are continually occurring. Invention is kept alive, and the mind is not ſuffered to fall into that drowſy ſtupidity, which, in a civilized ſociety, ſeems to benumb the underſtanding of almoſt all the inferior ranks of people. In thoſe barbarous ſocieties, as they are called, every man, it has already been obſerved, is a warrior. Every man too is in ſome meaſure a ſtateſman, and can form a tolerable judgment concerning the intereſt of the ſociety, and the conduct of thoſe who govern it. How far their chiefs are good judges in peace, or good leaders in war, is obvious to the obſervation of almoſt every ſingle

man among them. In such a society indeed, no man can well acquire that improved and refined understanding, which a few men sometimes possess in a more civilized state. Though in a rude society there is a good deal of variety in the occupations of every individual, there is not a great deal in those of the whole society. Every man does, or is capable of doing, almost every thing which any other man does, or is capable of doing. Every man has a considerable degree of knowledge, ingenuity, and invention; but scarce any man has a great degree. The degree, however, which is commonly possessed, is generally sufficient for conducting the whole simple business of the society. In a civilized state, on the contrary, though there is little variety in the occupations of the greater part of individuals, there is an almost infinite variety in those of the whole society. These varied occupations present an almost infinite variety of objects to the contemplation of those few, who, being attached to no particular occupation themselves, have leisure and inclination to examine the occupations of other people. The contemplation of so great a variety of objects necessarily exercises their minds in endless comparisons and combinations, and renders their understandings, in an extraordinary degree, both acute and comprehensive. Unless those few, however, happen to be placed in some very particular situations, their great abilities, though honourable to themselves, may contribute very little to the good government or happiness of their society. Notwithstanding the great abilities

lities of thoſe few, all the nobler parts of the human character may be, in a great meaſure, obliterated and extinguiſhed in the great body of the people.

The education of the common people requires, perhaps, in a civilized and commercial ſociety, the attention of the public more than that of people of ſome rank and fortune. People of ſome rank and fortune are generally eighteen or nineteen years of age before they enter upon that particular buſineſs, profeſſion, or trade, by which they propoſe to diſtinguiſh themſelves in the world. They have before that full time to acquire, or at leaſt to fit themſelves for afterwards acquiring, every accompliſhment which can recommend them to the public eſteem, or render them worthy of it. Their parents or guardians are generally ſufficiently anxious that they ſhould be ſo accompliſhed, and are, in moſt caſes, willing enough to lay out the expence which is neceſſary for that purpoſe. If they are not always properly educated, it is ſeldom from the want of expence laid out upon their education; but from the improper application of that expence. It is ſeldom from the want of maſters; but from the negligence and incapacity of the maſters who are to be had, and from the difficulty, or rather from the impoſſibility which there is, in the preſent ſtate of things, of finding any better. The employments too in which people of ſome rank or fortune ſpend the greater part of their lives, are not, like thoſe of the common people, ſimple and uniform. They are almoſt

almoſt all of them extremely complicated, and ſuch as exerciſe the head more than the hands. The underſtandings of thoſe who are engaged in ſuch employments can ſeldom grow torpid for want of exerciſe. The employments of people of ſome rank and fortune, beſides, are ſeldom ſuch as haraſs them from morning to night. They generally have a good deal of leiſure, during which they may perfect themſelves in every branch either of uſeful or ornamental knowledge of which they may have laid the foundation, or for which they may have acquired ſome taſte in the earlier part of life.

It is otherwiſe with the common people. They have little time to ſpare for education. Their parents can ſcarce afford to maintain them even in infancy. As ſoon as they are able to work, they muſt apply to ſome trade by which they can earn their ſubſiſtence. That trade too is generally ſo ſimple and uniform as to give little exerciſe to the underſtanding; while, at the ſame time, their labour is both ſo conſtant and ſo ſevere, that it leaves them little leiſure and leſs inclination to apply to, or even to think of any thing elſe.

But though the common people cannot, in any civilized ſociety, be ſo well inſtructed as people of ſome rank and fortune, the moſt eſſential parts of education, however, to read, write, and account, can be acquired at ſo early a period of life, that the greater part even of thoſe who are to be bred to the loweſt occupations, have time to acquire them before they can be employed

employed in thoſe occupations. For a very ſmall expence the public can facilitate, can encourage, and can even impoſe upon almoſt the whole body of the people, the neceſſity of acquiring thoſe moſt eſſential parts of education.

The public can facilitate this acquiſition, by eſtabliſhing in every pariſh or diſtrict a little ſchool, where children may be taught for a reward ſo moderate, that even a common labourer may afford it; the maſter being partly, but not wholly paid by the public; becauſe, if he was wholly, or even principally paid by it, he would ſoon learn to neglect his buſineſs. In Scotland the eſtabliſhment of ſuch pariſh ſchools has taught almoſt the whole common people to read, and a very great proportion of them to write and account. In England the eſtabliſhment of charity ſchools has had an effect of the ſame kind, though not ſo univerſally, becauſe the eſtabliſhment is not ſo univerſal. If in thoſe little ſchools the books, by which the children are taught to read, were a little more inſtructive than they commonly are; and if, inſtead of a little ſmattering of Latin, which the children of the common people are ſometimes taught there, and which can ſcarce ever be of any uſe to them; they were inſtructed in the elementary parts of geometry and mechanics, the literary education of this rank of people would perhaps be as complete as it can be. There is ſcarce a common trade which does not afford ſome opportunities of applying to it the principles of geometry and mechanics, and which would not therefore gradually exerciſe and improve

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prove the common people in thoſe principles, the neceſſary introduction to the moſt ſublime as well as to the moſt uſeful ſciences.

The public can encourage the acquiſition of thoſe moſt eſſential parts of education by giving ſmall premiums, and little badges of diſtinction, to the children of the common people who excel in them.

The public can impoſe upon almoſt the whole body of the people the neceſſity of acquiring thoſe moſt eſſential parts of education, by obliging every man to undergo an examination or probation in them before he can obtain the freedom in any corporation, or be allowed to ſet up any trade, either in a village or town corporate.

It was in this manner, by facilitating the acquiſition of their military and gymnaſtic exerciſes, by encouraging it, and even by impoſing upon the whole body of the people the neceſſity of learning thoſe exerciſes, that the Greek and Roman republics maintained the martial ſpirit of their reſpective citizens. They facilitated the acquiſition of thoſe exerciſes, by appointing a certain place for learning and practiſing them, and by granting to certain maſters the privilege of teaching in that place. Thoſe maſters do not appear to have had either ſalaries or excluſive privileges of any kind. Their reward conſiſted altogether in what they got from their ſcholars; and a citizen who had learnt his exerciſes in the public Gymnaſia, had no ſort of legal advantage over one who had learnt them privately, provided the latter had learnt them equally well.

Thoſe

Thoſe republics encouraged the acquiſition of thoſe exerciſes, by beſtowing little premiums and badges of diſtinction upon thoſe who excelled in them. To have gained a prize in the Olympic, Iſthmian, or Nemæn games, gave illuſtration, not only to the perſon who gained it, but to his whole family and kindred. The obligation which every citizen was under to ſerve a certain number of years, if called upon, in the armies of the republic, ſufficiently impoſed the neceſſity of learning thoſe exerciſes without which he could not be fit for that ſervice.

That in the progreſs of improvement the practice of military exerciſes, unleſs government takes proper pains to ſupport it, goes gradually to decay, and, together with it, the martial ſpirit of the great body of the people, the example of modern Europe ſufficiently demonſtrates. But the ſecurity of every ſociety muſt always depend, more or leſs, upon the martial ſpirit of the great body of the people. In the preſent times, indeed, that martial ſpirit alone, and unſupported by a well diſciplined ſtanding army, would not, perhaps, be ſufficient for the defence and ſecurity of any ſociety. But where every citizen had the ſpirit of a ſoldier, a ſmaller ſtanding army would ſurely be requiſite. That ſpirit, beſides, would neceſſarily diminiſh very much the dangers to liberty, whether real or imaginary, which are commonly apprehended from a ſtanding army. As it would very much facilitate the operations of that army againſt a foreign invader, ſo it would obſtruct them as much if unfortunately

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they ſhould ever be directed againſt the conſtitution of the ſtate.

The ancient inſtitutions of Greece and Rome ſeem to have been much more effectual, for maintaining the martial ſpirit of the great body of the people, than the eſtabliſhment of what are called the militias of modern times. They were much more ſimple. When they were once eſtabliſhed, they executed themſelves, and it required little or no attention from government to maintain them in the moſt perfect vigour. Whereas to maintain, even in tolerable execution, the complex regulations of any modern militia, requires the continual and painful attention of government, without which they are conſtantly falling into total neglect and diſuſe. The influence, beſides, of the ancient inſtitutions was much more univerſal. By means of them the whole body of the people was completely inſtructed in the uſe of arms. Whereas it is but a very ſmall part of them who can ever be ſo inſtructed by the regulations of any modern militia, except, perhaps, that of Switzerland. But a coward, a man incapable either of defending or of revenging himſelf, evidently wants one of the moſt eſſential parts of the character of a man. He is as much mutilated and deformed in his mind as another is in his body, who is either deprived of ſome of its moſt eſſential members, or has loſt the uſe of them. He is evidently the more wretched and miſerable of the two; becauſe happineſs and miſery, which reſide altogether in the mind, muſt neceſſarily depend more upon the healthful or

unhealthful, the mutilated or entire ſtate of the mind, than upon that of the body. Even though the martial ſpirit of the people were of no uſe towards the defence of the ſociety, yet to prevent that ſort of mental mutilation, deformity, and wretchedneſs, which cowardice neceſſarily involves in it, from ſpreading themſelves through the great body of the people, would ſtill deſerve the moſt ſerious attention of government; in the ſame manner as it would deſerve its moſt ſerious attention to prevent a leproſy, or any other loathſome and offenſive diſeaſe, though neither mortal nor dangerous, from ſpreading itſelf among them; though, perhaps, no other public good might reſult from ſuch attention beſides the prevention of ſo great a public evil.

The ſame thing may be ſaid of the groſs ignorance and ſtupidity which, in a civilized ſociety, ſeem ſo frequently to benumb the underſtandings of all the inferior ranks of people. A man without the proper uſe of the intellectual faculties of a man, is, if poſſible, more contemptible than even a coward, and ſeems to be mutilated and deformed in a ſtill more eſſential part of the character of human nature. Though the ſtate was to derive no advantage from the inſtruction of the inferior ranks of people, it would ſtill deſerve its attention that they ſhould not be altogether uninſtructed. The ſtate, however, derives no inconſiderable advantage from their inſtruction. The more they are inſtructed, the leſs liable they are to the deluſions of enthuſiaſm and ſuperſtition, which, among ignorant nations, frequently

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frequently occaſion the moſt dreadful diſorders. An inſtructed and intelligent people, beſides, are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and ſtupid one. They feel themſelves, each individually, more reſpectable, and more likely to obtain the reſpect of their lawful ſuperiors, and they are therefore more diſpoſed to reſpect thoſe ſuperiors. They are more diſpoſed to examine, and more capable of ſeeing through the intereſted complaints of faction and ſedition, and they are, upon that account, leſs apt to be miſled into any wanton or unneceſſary oppoſition to the meaſures of government. In free countries, where the ſafety of government depends very much upon the favourable judgment which the people may form of its conduct, it muſt ſurely be of the higheſt importance that they ſhould not be diſpoſed to judge raſhly or capriciouſly concerning it.

ARTICLE III.

Of the Expence of the Inſtitutions for the Inſtruction of People of all Ages.

THE inſtitutions for the inſtruction of people of all ages are chiefly thoſe for religious inſtruction. This is a ſpecies of inſtruction of which the object is not ſo much to render the people good citizens in this world, as to prepare them for another and a better world in a life to come. The teachers of the doctrine which contains this inſtruction, in the ſame manner as other teachers, may either depend altogether for their ſubſiſtence

ence upon the voluntary contributions of their hearers; or they may derive it from ſome other fund to which the law of their country may entitle them; ſuch as a landed eſtate, a tythe or land-tax, an eſtabliſhed ſalary or ſtipend. Their exertion, their zeal and induſtry, are likely to be much greater in the former ſituation than in the latter. In this reſpect the teachers of new religions have always had a conſiderable advantage in attacking thoſe ancient and eſtabliſhed ſyſtems of which the clergy, repoſing themſelves upon their benefices, had neglected to keep up the fervour of faith and devotion in the great body of the people; and having given themſelves up to indolence, were become altogether incapable of making any vigorous exertion in defence even of their own eſtabliſhment. The clergy of an eſtabliſhed and well-endowed religion frequently become men of learning and elegance, who poſſeſs all the virtues of gentlemen, or which can recommend them to the eſteem of gentlemen; but they are apt gradually to loſe the qualities, both good and bad, which gave them authority and influence with the inferior ranks of people, and which had perhaps been the original cauſes of the ſucceſs and eſtabliſhment of their religion. Such a clergy, when attacked by a ſet of popular and bold, though perhaps ſtupid and ignorant enthuſiaſts, feel themſelves as perfectly defenceleſs as the indolent, effeminate, and full-fed nations of the ſouthern parts of Aſia, when they were invaded by the active, hardy, and hungry Tartars of the North.

Such a clergy, upon ſuch an emergency, have commonly no other reſource than to call upon the civil magiſtrate to perſecute, deſtroy, or drive out their adverſaries, as Diſturbers of the public peace. It was thus that the Roman Catholic clergy called upon the civil magiſtrate to perſecute the Proteſtants; and the Church of England, to perſecute the Diſſenters; and that in general every religious ſect, when it has once enjoyed for a century or two the ſecurity of a legal eſtabliſhment, has found itſelf incapable of making any vigorous defence againſt any new ſect which choſe to attack its doctrine or diſcipline. Upon ſuch occaſions the advantage in point of learning and good writing may ſometimes be on the ſide of the eſtabliſhed church. But the arts of popularity, all the arts of gaining proſelytes, are conſtantly on the ſide of its adverſaries. In England thoſe arts have been long neglected by the well-endowed clergy of the eſtabliſhed church, and are at preſent chiefly cultivated by the Diſſenters and by the Methodiſts. The independent proviſions, however, which in many places have been made for diſſenting teachers, by means of voluntary ſubſcriptions, of truſt rights, and other evaſions of the law, ſeem very much to have abated the zeal and activity of thoſe teachers. They have many of them become very learned, ingenious, and reſpectable men; but they have in general ceaſed to be very popular preachers. The Methodiſts, without half the learning of the Diſſenters, are much more in vogue.

In

CHAP. I.

In the church of Rome, the induſtry and zeal of the inferior clergy are kept more alive by the powerful motive of ſelf-intereſt, than perhaps in any eſtabliſhed Proteſtant church. The parochial clergy derive, many of them, a very conſiderable part of their ſubſiſtence from the voluntary oblations of the people; a ſource of revenue which confeſſion gives them many opportunities of improving. The mendicant orders derive their whole ſubſiſtence from ſuch oblations. It is with them, as with the huſſars and light infantry of ſome armies; no plunder, no pay. The parochial clergy are like thoſe teachers whoſe reward depends partly upon their ſalary, and partly upon the fees or honoraries which they get from their pupils; and theſe muſt always depend more or leſs upon their induſtry and reputation. The mendicant orders are like thoſe teachers whoſe ſubſiſtence depends altogether upon their induſtry. They are obliged, therefore, to uſe every art which can animate the devotion of the common people. The eſtabliſhment of the two great mendicant orders of St. Dominic and St. Francis, it is obſerved by Machiavel, revived, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the languiſhing faith and devotion of the Catholic church. In Roman Catholic countries the ſpirit of devotion is ſupported altogether by the monks and by the poorer parochial clergy. The great dignitaries of the church, with all the accompliſhments of gentlemen and men of the world, and ſometimes with thoſe of men of learning, are careful enough to maintain the neceſſary diſci-

BOOK V.

pline over their inferiors, but ſeldom give themſelves any trouble about the inſtruction of the people.

" Moſt of the arts and profeſſions in a ſtate," ſays by far the moſt illuſtrious philoſopher and hiſtorian of the preſent age, " are of ſuch a na- " ture, that, while they promote the intereſts of " the ſociety, they are alſo uſeful or agreeable " to ſome individuals; and in that caſe, the " conſtant rule of the magiſtrate, except, per- " haps, on the firſt introduction of any art, is, to " leave the profeſſion to itſelf, and truſt its en- " couragement to the individuals who reap the " benefit of it. The artizans, finding their pro- " fits to riſe by the favour of their cuſtomers, " increaſe, as much as poſſible, their ſkill and " induſtry; and as matters are not diſturbed by " any injudicious tampering, the commodity is " always ſure to be at all times nearly propor- " tioned to the demand.

" But there are alſo ſome callings, which, " though uſeful and even neceſſary in a ſtate, " bring no advantage or pleaſure to any indivi- " dual, and the ſupreme power is obliged to alter " its conduct with regard to the retainers of " thoſe profeſſions. It muſt give them public en- " couragement in order to their ſubſiſtence; and " it muſt provide againſt that negligence to " which they will naturally be ſubject, either by " annexing particular honours to the profeſſion, " by eſtabliſhing a long ſubordination of ranks " and a ſtrict dependance, or by ſome other expe- " dient. The perſons employed in the finances,

" fleets, and magiſtracy, are inſtances of this or- CHAP.
" der of men. I.

" It may naturally be thought, at firſt ſight,
" that the eccleſiaſtics belong to the firſt claſs,
" and that their encouragement, as well as that
" of lawyers and phyſicians, may ſafely be en-
" truſted to the liberality of individuals, who
" are attached to their doctrines, and who find
" benefit or conſolation from their ſpiritual mi-
" niſtry and aſſiſtance. Their induſtry and vi-
" gilance will, no doubt, be whetted by ſuch an
" additional motive; and their ſkill in the pro-
" feſſion, as well as their addreſs in governing
" the minds of the people, muſt receive daily
" increaſe, from their increaſing practice, ſtudy,
" and attention.

" But if we conſider the matter more cloſely,
" we ſhall find, that this intereſted diligence of
" the clergy is what every wiſe legiſlator will
" ſtudy to prevent; becauſe, in every religion ex-
" cept the true, it is highly pernicious, and it has
" even a natural tendency to pervert the true, by
" infuſing into it a ſtrong mixture of ſuperſtition,
" folly, and deluſion. Each ghoſtly practitioner,
" in order to render himſelf more precious and
" ſacred in the eyes of his retainers, will in-
" ſpire them with the moſt violent abhorrence
" of all other ſects, and continually endea-
" vour, by ſome novelty, to excite the lan-
" guid devotion of his audience. No regard
" will be paid to truth, morals, or decency, in
" the doctrines inculcated. Every tenet will be
" adopted that beſt ſuits the diſorderly affections

BOOK V.

" of the human frame. Cuſtomers will be drawn " to each conventicle by new induſtry and ad- " dreſs in practiſing on the paſſions and credu- " lity of the populace. And in the end, the civil " magiſtrate will find, that he has dearly paid " for his pretended frugality, in ſaving a fixed " eſtabliſhment for the prieſts; and that in " reality the moſt decent and advantageous " compoſition which he can make with the ſpi- " ritual guides, is to bribe their indolence, by aſ- " ſigning ſtated ſalaries to their profeſſion, and " rendering it ſuperfluous for them to be farther " active, than merely to prevent their flock from " ſtraying in queſt of new paſtures. And in this " manner eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhments, though " commonly they aroſe at firſt from religious " views, prove in the end advantageous to the " political intereſts of ſociety."

But whatever may have been the good or bad effects of the independent proviſion of the clergy; it has, perhaps, been very ſeldom beſtowed upon them from any view to thoſe effects. Times of violent religious controverſy have generally been times of equally violent political faction. Upon ſuch occaſions, each political party has either found it, or imagined it, for its intereſt, to league itſelf with ſome one or other of the contending religious ſects. But this could be done only by adopting, or at leaſt by favouring, the tenets of that particular ſect. The ſect which had the good fortune to be leagued with the conquering party, neceſſarily ſhared in the victory of its ally, by whoſe favour and protection it was ſoon enabled

enabled in some degree to silence and subdue all its adversaries. Those adversaries had generally leagued themselves with the enemies of the conquering party, and were therefore the enemies of that party. The clergy of this particular sect having thus become complete masters of the field, and their influence and authority with the great body of the people being in its highest vigour, they were powerful enough to over-awe the chiefs and leaders of their own party, and to oblige the civil magistrate to respect their opinions and inclinations. The first demand was generally, that he should silence and subdue all their adversaries; and their second, that he should bestow an independent provision on themselves. As they had generally contributed a good deal to the victory, it seemed not unreasonable that they should have some share in the spoil. They were weary, besides, of humouring the people, and of depending upon their caprice for a subsistence. In making this demand therefore they consulted their own ease and comfort, without troubling themselves about the effect which it might have in future times upon the influence and authority of their order. The civil magistrate, who could comply with this demand only by giving them something which he would have chosen much rather to take, or to keep to himself, was seldom very forward to grant it. Necessity, however, always forced him to submit at last, though frequently not till after many delays, evasions, and affected excuses.

But if politics had never called in the aid of religion, had the conquering party never adopted

the tenets of one ſect more than thoſe of another, when it had gained the victory, it would probably have dealt equally and impartially with all the different ſects, and have allowed every man to chuſe his own prieſt and his own religion as he thought proper. There would in this caſe, no doubt, have been a great multitude of religious ſects. Almoſt every different congregation might probably have made a little ſect by itſelf, or have entertained ſome peculiar tenets of its own. Each teacher would no doubt have felt himſelf under the neceſſity of making the utmoſt exertion, and of uſing every art both to preſerve and to increaſe the number of his diſciples. But as every other teacher would have felt himſelf under the ſame neceſſity, the ſucceſs of no one teacher, or ſect of teachers, could have been very great. The intereſted and active zeal of religious teachers can be dangerous and troubleſome only where there is, either but one ſect tolerated in the ſociety, or where the whole of a large ſociety is divided into two or three great ſects; the teachers of each acting by concert, and under a regular diſcipline and ſubordination. But that zeal muſt be altogether innocent where the ſociety is divided into two or three hundred, or perhaps into as many thouſand ſmall ſects, of which no one could be conſiderable enough to diſturb the public tranquillity. The teachers of each ſect, ſeeing themſelves ſurrounded on all ſides with more adverſaries than friends, would be obliged to learn that candour and moderation which is ſo ſeldom to be found among the teachers of thoſe great ſects, whoſe tenets,

tenets, being ſupported by the civil magiſtrate, are held in veneration by almoſt all the inhabitants of extenſive kingdoms and empires, and who therefore ſee nothing round them but followers, diſciples, and humble admirers. The teachers of each little ſect, finding themſelves almoſt alone, would be obliged to reſpect thoſe of almoſt every other ſect, and the conceſſions which they would mutually find it both convenient and agreeable to make to one another, might in time probably reduce the doctrine of the greater part of them to that pure and rational religion, free from every mixture of abſurdity, impoſture, or fanaticiſm, ſuch as wiſe men have in all ages of the world wiſhed to ſee eſtabliſhed; but ſuch as poſitive law has perhaps never yet eſtabliſhed, and probably never will eſtabliſh in any country: becauſe, with regard to religion, poſitive law always has been, and probably always will be, more or leſs influenced by popular ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm. This plan of eccleſiaſtical government, or more properly of no eccleſiaſtical government, was what the ſect called Independents, a ſect no doubt of very wild enthuſiaſts, propoſed to eſtabliſh in England towards the end of the civil war. If it had been eſtabliſhed, though of a very unphiloſophical origin, it would probably by this time have been productive of the moſt philoſophical good temper and moderation with regard to every ſort of religious principle. It has been eſtabliſhed in Penſylvania, where, though the Quakers happen to be the moſt numerous, the law in reality favours

favours no one ſect more than another, and it is there ſaid to have been productive of this philoſophical good temper and moderation.

But though this equality of treatment ſhould not be productive of this good temper and moderation in all, or even in the greater part of the religious ſects of a particular country; yet provided thoſe ſects were ſufficiently numerous, and each of them conſequently too ſmall to diſturb the public tranquillity, the exceſſive zeal of each for its particular tenets could not well be productive of any very hurtful effects, but, on the contrary, of ſeveral good ones: and if the government was perfectly decided both to let them all alone, and to oblige them all to let alone one another, there is little danger that they would not of their own accord ſubdivide themſelves faſt enough, ſo as ſoon to become ſufficiently numerous.

In every civilized ſociety, in every ſociety where the diſtinction of ranks has once been completely eſtabliſhed, there have been always two different ſchemes or ſyſtems of morality current at the ſame time; of which the one may be called the ſtrict or auſtere; the other the liberal, or, if you will, the looſe ſyſtem. The former is generally admired and revered by the common people, the latter is commonly more eſteemed and adopted by what are called people of faſhion. The degree of diſapprobation with which we ought to mark the vices of levity, the vices which are apt to ariſe from great proſperity, and from the exceſs of gaiety and good humour, ſeems to conſtitute

conſtitute the principal diſtinction between thoſe two oppoſite ſchemes or ſyſtems. In the liberal or looſe ſyſtem, luxury, wanton and even diſorderly mirth, the purſuit of pleaſure to ſome degree of intemperance, the breach of chaſtity, at leaſt in one of the two ſexes, &c. provided they are not accompanied with groſs indecency, and do not lead to falſhood or injuſtice, are generally treated with a good deal of indulgence, and are eaſily either excuſed or pardoned altogether. In the auſtere ſyſtem, on the contrary, thoſe exceſſes are regarded with the utmoſt abhorrence and deteſtation. The vices of levity are always ruinous to the common people, and a ſingle week's thoughtleſſneſs and diſſipation is often ſufficient to undo a poor workman for ever, and to drive him through deſpair upon committing the moſt enormous crimes. The wiſer and better ſort of the common people, therefore, have always the utmoſt abhorrence and deteſtation of ſuch exceſſes, which their experience tells them are ſo immediately fatal to people of their condition. The diſorder and extravagance of ſeveral years, on the contrary, will not always ruin a man of faſhion, and people of that rank are very apt to conſider the power of indulging in ſome degree of exceſs as one of the advantages of their fortune, and the liberty of doing ſo without cenſure or reproach, as one of the privileges which belong to their ſtation. In people of their own ſtation, therefore, they regard ſuch exceſſes with but a ſmall degree of diſapprobation, and cenſure them either very ſlightly or not at all.

Almoſt

Almoſt all religious ſects have begun among the common people, from whom they have generally drawn their earlieſt, as well as their moſt numerous proſelytes. The auſtere ſyſtem of morality has, accordingly, been adopted by thoſe ſects almoſt conſtantly, or with very few exceptions; for there have been ſome. It was the ſyſtem by which they could beſt recommend themſelves to that order of people to whom they firſt propoſed their plan of reformation upon what had been before eſtabliſhed. Many of them, perhaps the greater part of them, have even endeavoured to gain credit by refining upon this auſtere ſyſtem, and by carrying it to ſome degree of folly and extravagance; and this exceſſive rigour has frequently recommended them more than any thing elſe to the reſpect and veneration of the common people.

A man of rank and fortune is by his ſtation the diſtinguiſhed member of a great ſociety, who attend to every part of his conduct, and who thereby oblige him to attend to every part of it himſelf. His authority and conſideration depend very much upon the reſpect which this ſociety bears to him. He dare not do any thing which would diſgrace or diſcredit him in it, and he is obliged to a very ſtrict obſervation of that ſpecies of morals, whether liberal or auſtere, which the general conſent of this ſociety preſcribes to perſons of his rank and fortune. A man of low condition, on the contrary, is far from being a diſtinguiſhed member of any great ſociety. While he remains in a country village his conduct may be attended

attended to, and he may be obliged to attend to it himſelf. In this ſituation, and in this ſituation only, he may have what is called a character to loſe. But as ſoon as he comes into a great city, he is ſunk in obſcurity and darkneſs. His conduct is obſerved and attended to by nobody, and he is therefore very likely to neglect it himſelf, and to abandon himſelf to every ſort of low profligacy and vice. He never emerges ſo effectually from this obſcurity, his conduct never excites ſo much the attention of any reſpectable ſociety, as by his becoming the member of a ſmall religious ſect. He from that moment acquires a degree of conſideration which he never had before. All his brother ſectaries are, for the credit of the ſect, intereſted to obſerve his conduct, and if he gives occaſion to any ſcandal, if he deviates very much from thoſe auſtere morals which they almoſt always require of one another, to puniſh him by what is always a very ſevere puniſhment, even where no civil effects attend it, expulſion or excommunication from the ſect. In little religious ſects, accordingly, the morals of the common people have been almoſt always remarkably regular and orderly; generally much more ſo than in the eſtabliſhed church. The morals of thoſe little ſects, indeed, have frequently been rather diſagreeably rigorous and unſocial.

There are two very eaſy and effectual remedies, however, by whoſe joint operation the ſtate might, without violence, correct whatever was unſocial or diſagreeably rigorous in the morals of all the little ſects into which the country was divided.

The

The firſt of thoſe remedies is the ſtudy of ſcience and philoſophy, which the ſtate might render almoſt univerſal among all people of middling or more than middling rank and fortune; not by giving ſalaries to teachers in order to make them negligent and idle, but by inſtituting ſome ſort of probation, even in the higher and more difficult ſciences, to be undergone by every perſon before he was permitted to exerciſe any liberal profeſſion, or before he could be received as a candidate for any honourable office of truſt or profit. If the ſtate impoſed upon this order of men the neceſſity of learning, it would have no occaſion to give itſelf any trouble about providing them with proper teachers. They would ſoon find better teachers for themſelves than any whom the ſtate could provide for them. Science is the great antidote to the poiſon of enthuſiaſm and ſuperſtition; and where all the ſuperior ranks of people were ſecured from it, the inferior ranks could not be much expoſed to it.

The ſecond of thoſe remedies is the frequency and gaiety of public diverſions. The ſtate, by encouraging, that is by giving entire liberty to all thoſe who for their own intereſt would attempt, without ſcandal or indecency, to amuſe and divert the people by painting, poetry, muſic, dancing; by all ſorts of dramatic repreſentations and exhibitions, would eaſily diſſipate, in the greater part of them, that melancholy and gloomy humour which is almoſt always the nurſe of popular ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm. Public diverſions have always been the objects of dread and

and hatred, to all the fanatical promoters of thoſe popular frenzies. The gaiety and good humour which thoſe diverſions inſpire were altogether inconſiſtent with that temper of mind, which was fitteſt for their purpoſe, or which they could beſt work upon. Dramatic repreſentations beſides, frequently expoſing their artifices to public ridicule, and ſometimes even to public execration, were upon that account, more than all other diverſions, the objects of their peculiar abhorrence. CHAP. I.

In a country where the law favoured the teachers of no one religion more than thoſe of another, it would not be neceſſary that any of them ſhould have any particular or immediate dependency upon the ſovereign or executive power, or that he ſhould have any thing to do, either in appointing, or in diſmiſſing them from their offices. In ſuch a ſituation he would have no occaſion to give himſelf any concern about them, further than to keep the peace among them, in the ſame manner as among the reſt of his ſubjects; that is, to hinder them from proſecuting, abuſing, or oppreſſing one another. But it is quite otherwiſe in countries where there is an eſtabliſhed or governing religion. The ſovereign can in this caſe never be ſecure, unleſs he has the means of influencing in a conſiderable degree the greater part of the teachers of that religion.

The clergy of every eſtabliſhed church conſtitute a great incorporation. They can act in concert, and purſue their intereſt upon one plan and with one ſpirit, as much as if they were under

the direction of one man; and they are frequently too under such direction. Their interest as an incorporated body is never the same with that of the sovereign, and is sometimes directly opposite to it. Their great interest is to maintain their authority with the people; and this authority depends upon the supposed certainty and importance of the whole doctrine which they inculcate, and upon the supposed necessity of adopting every part of it with the most implicit faith, in order to avoid eternal misery. Should the sovereign have the imprudence to appear either to deride or doubt himself of the most trifling part of their doctrine, or from humanity attempt to protect those who did either the one or the other, the punctilious honour of a clergy who have no sort of dependency upon him, is immediately provoked to proscribe him as a profane person, and to employ all the terrors of religion in order to oblige the people to transfer their allegiance to some more orthodox and obedient prince. Should he oppose any of their pretensions or usurpations, the danger is equally great. The princes who have dared in this manner to rebel against the church, over and above this crime of rebellion, have generally been charged too with the additional crime of heresy, notwithstanding their solemn protestations of their faith and humble submission to every tenet which she thought proper to prescribe to them. But the authority of religion is superior to every other authority. The fears which it suggests conquer all other fears. When the authorised teachers of religion

ligion propagate through the great body of the people doctrines ſubverſive of the authority of the ſovereign, it is by violence only, or by the force of a ſtanding army, that he can maintain his authority. Even a ſtanding army cannot in this caſe give him any laſting ſecurity; becauſe if the ſoldiers are not foreigners, which can ſeldom be the caſe, but drawn from the great body of the people, which muſt almoſt always be the caſe, they are likely to be ſoon corrupted by thoſe very doctrines. The revolutions which the turbulence of the Greek clergy was continually occaſioning at Conſtantinople, as long as the Eaſtern empire ſubſiſted; the convulſions which, during the courſe of ſeveral centuries, the turbulence of the Roman clergy was continually occaſioning in every part of Europe, ſufficiently demonſtrate how precarious and inſecure muſt always be the ſituation of the ſovereign who has no proper means of influencing the clergy of the eſtabliſhed and governing religion of his country.

Articles of faith, as well as all other ſpiritual matters, it is evident enough, are not within the proper department of a temporal ſovereign, who, though he may be very well qualified for protecting, is ſeldom ſuppoſed to be ſo for inſtructing the people. With regard to ſuch matters, therefore, his authority can ſeldom be ſufficient to counterbalance the united authority of the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church. The public tranquillity, however, and his own ſecurity, may frequently depend upon the doctrines which they may think proper to propagate concerning ſuch

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matters. As he can ſeldom directly oppoſe their deciſion, therefore, with proper weight and authority, it is neceſſary that he ſhould be able to influence it; and he can influence it only by the fears and expectations which he may excite in the greater part of the individuals of the order. Thoſe fears and expectations may conſiſt in the fear of deprivation or other puniſhment, and in the expectation of further preferment.

In all Chriſtian churches the benefices of the clergy are a ſort of freeholds which they enjoy, not during pleaſure, but during life, or good behaviour. If they held them by a more precarious tenure, and were liable to be turned out upon every ſlight diſobligation, either of the ſovereign or of his miniſters, it would perhaps be impoſſible for them to maintain their authority with the people, who would then conſider them as mercenary dependents upon the court, in the ſincerity of whoſe inſtructions they could no longer have any confidence. But ſhould the ſovereign attempt irregularly, and by violence, to deprive any number of clergymen of their freeholds, on account, perhaps, of their having propagated, with more than ordinary zeal, ſome factious or ſeditious doctrine, he would only render, by ſuch perſecution, both them and their doctrine ten times more popular, and therefore ten times more troubleſome and dangerous than they had been before. Fear is in almoſt all caſes a wretched inſtrument of government, and ought in particular never to be employed againſt any order of men who have the ſmalleſt pretenſions to inde-

independency. To attempt to terrify them, ſerves only to irritate their bad humour, and to confirm them in an oppoſition which more gentle uſage perhaps might eaſily induce them, either to ſoften, or to lay aſide altogether. The violence which the French government uſually employed in order to oblige all their parliaments, or ſovereign courts of juſtice, to enregiſter any unpopular edict, very ſeldom ſucceeded. The means commonly employed, however, the impriſonment of all the refractory members, one would think were forcible enough. The princes of the houſe of Stewart ſometimes employed the like means in order to influence ſome of the members of the parliament of England; and they generally found them equally intractable. The parliament of England is now managed in another manner; and a very ſmall experiment, which the Duke of Choiſeul made about twelve years ago upon the parliament of Paris, demonſtrated ſufficiently that all the parliaments of France might have been managed ſtill more eaſily in the ſame manner. That experiment was not purſued. For though management and perſuaſion are always the eaſieſt and the ſafeſt inſtruments of government, as force and violence are the worſt and the moſt dangerous, yet ſuch, it ſeems, is the natural inſolence of man, that he almoſt always diſdains to uſe the good inſtrument, except when he cannot or dare not uſe the bad one. The French government could and durſt uſe force, and therefore diſdained to uſe management and perſuaſion. But there is no order of men, it appears, I believe,

from the experience of all ages, upon whom it is ſo dangerous, or rather ſo perfectly ruinous, to employ force and violence, as upon the reſpected clergy of any eſtabliſhed church. The rights, the privileges, the perſonal liberty of every individual eccleſiaſtic, who is upon good terms with his own order, are, even in the moſt deſpotic governments, more reſpected than thoſe of any other perſon of nearly equal rank and fortune. It is ſo in every gradation of deſpotiſm, from that of the gentle and mild government of Paris, to that of the violent and furious government of Conſtantinople. But though this order of men can ſcarce ever be forced, they may be managed as eaſily as any other; and the ſecurity of the ſovereign, as well as the public tranquillity, ſeems to depend very much upon the means which he has of managing them; and thoſe means ſeem to conſiſt altogether in the preferment which he has to beſtow upon them.

In the ancient conſtitution of the Chriſtian church, the biſhop of each dioceſe was elected by the joint votes of the clergy and of the people of the epiſcopal city. The people did not long retain their right of election; and while they did retain it, they almoſt always acted under the influence of the clergy, who in ſuch ſpiritual matters appeared to be their natural guides. The clergy, however, ſoon grew weary of the trouble of managing them, and found it eaſier to elect their own biſhops themſelves. The abbot, in the ſame manner, was elected by the monks of the monaſtery, at leaſt in the greater part of abbacies.

All

All the inferior eccleſiaſtical benefices comprehended within the dioceſe were collated by the biſhop, who beſtowed them upon ſuch eccleſiaſtics as he thought proper. All church preferments were in this manner in the diſpoſal of the church. The ſovereign, though he might have ſome indirect influence in thoſe elections, and though it was ſometimes uſual to aſk both his conſent to elect, and his approbation of the election, yet had no direct or ſufficient means of managing the clergy. The ambition of every clergyman naturally led him to pay court, not ſo much to his ſovereign, as to his own order, from which only he could expect preferment.

Through the greater part of Europe the Pope gradually drew to himſelf firſt the collation of almoſt all biſhoprics and abbacies, or of what were called conſiſtorial benefices, and afterwards, by various machinations and pretences, of the greater part of inferior benefices comprehended within each dioceſe; little more being left to the biſhop than what was barely neceſſary to give him a decent authority with his own clergy. By this arrangement the condition of the ſovereign was ſtill worſe than it had been before. The clergy of all the different countries of Europe were thus formed into a ſort of ſpiritual army, diſperſed in different quarters, indeed, but of which all the movements and operations could now be directed by one head, and conducted upon one uniform plan. The clergy of each particular country might be conſidered as a particular detachment of that army, of which the

operations could eaſily be ſupported and ſeconded by all the other detachments quartered in the different countries round about. Each detachment was not only independent of the ſovereign of the country in which it was quartered, and by which it was maintained, but dependent upon a foreign ſovereign, who could at any time turn its arms againſt the ſovereign of that particular country, and ſupport them by the arms of all the other detachments.

Thoſe arms were the moſt formidable that can well be imagined. In the ancient ſtate of Europe, before the eſtabliſhment of arts and manufactures, the wealth of the clergy gave them the ſame ſort of influence over the common people, which that of the great barons gave them over their reſpective vaſſals, tenants, and retainers. In the great landed eſtates, which the miſtaken piety both of princes and private perſons had beſtowed upon the church, juriſdictions were eſtabliſhed of the ſame kind with thoſe of the great barons; and for the ſame reaſon. In thoſe great landed eſtates, the clergy, or their bailiffs, could eaſily keep the peace without the ſupport or aſſiſtance either of the king or of any other perſon; and neither the king nor any other perſon could keep the peace there without the ſupport and aſſiſtance of the clergy. The juriſdictions of the clergy, therefore, in their particular baronies or manors, were equally independent, and equally excluſive of the authority of the king's courts, as thoſe of the great temporal lords. The tenants of the clergy were, like thoſe of the great barons, almoſt all

all tenants at will, entirely dependent upon their immediate lords, and therefore liable to be called out at pleaſure, in order to fight in any quarrel in which the clergy might think proper to engage them. Over and above the rents of thoſe eſtates, the clergy poſſeſſed, in the tythes, a very large portion of the rents of all the other eſtates in every kingdom of Europe. The revenues ariſing from both thoſe ſpecies of rents were, the greater part of them, paid in kind, in corn, wine, cattle, poultry, &c. The quantity exceeded greatly what the clergy could themſelves conſume; and there were neither arts nor manufactures for the produce of which they could exchange the ſurplus. The clergy could derive advantage from this immenſe ſurplus in no other way than by employing it, as the great barons employed the like ſurplus of their revenues, in the moſt profuſe hoſpitality, and in the moſt extenſive charity. Both the hoſpitality and the charity of the ancient clergy, accordingly, are ſaid to have been very great. They not only maintained almoſt the whole poor of every kingdom, but many knights and gentlemen had frequently no other means of ſubſiſtence than by travelling about from monaſtery to monaſtery, under pretence of devotion, but in reality to enjoy the hoſpitality of the clergy. The retainers of ſome particular prelates were often as numerous as thoſe of the greateſt lay-lords; and the retainers of all the clergy taken together were, perhaps, more numerous than thoſe of all the lay-lords. There was always much more union among the clergy than among

the lay-lords. The former were under a regular diſcipline and ſubordination to the papal authority. The latter were under no regular diſcipline or ſubordination, but almoſt always equally jealous of one another, and of the king. Though the tenants and retainers of the clergy, therefore, had both together been leſs numerous than thoſe of the great lay-lords, and their tenants were probably much leſs numerous, yet their union would have rendered them more formidable. The hoſpitality and charity of the clergy too, not only gave them the command of a great temporal force, but increaſed very much the weight of their ſpiritual weapons. Thoſe virtues procured them the higheſt reſpect and veneration among all the inferior ranks of people, of whom many were conſtantly, and almoſt all occaſionally, fed by them. Every thing belonging or related to ſo popular an order, its poſſeſſions, its privileges, its doctrines, neceſſarily appeared ſacred in the eyes of the common people, and every violation of them, whether real or pretended, the higheſt act of ſacrilegious wickedneſs and profaneneſs. In this ſtate of things, if the ſovereign frequently found it difficult to reſiſt the confederacy of a few of the great nobility, we cannot wonder that he ſhould find it ſtill more ſo to reſiſt the united force of the clergy of his own dominions, ſupported by that of the clergy of all the neighbouring dominions. In ſuch circumſtances the wonder is, not that he was ſometimes obliged to yield, but that he ever was able to reſiſt.

The

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The privileges of the clergy in thoſe ancient times (which to us who live in the preſent times appear the moſt abſurd), their total exemption from the ſecular juriſdiction, for example, or what in England was called the benefit of clergy; were the natural or rather the neceſſary conſequences of this ſtate of things. How dangerous muſt it have been for the ſovereign to attempt to puniſh a clergyman for any crime whatever, if his own order were diſpoſed to protect him, and to repreſent either the proof as inſufficient for convicting ſo holy a man, or the puniſhment as too ſevere to be inflicted upon one whoſe perſon had been rendered ſacred by religion? The ſovereign could, in ſuch circumſtances, do no better than leave him to be tried by the eccleſiaſtical courts, who, for the honour of their own order, were intereſted to reſtrain, as much as poſſible, every member of it from committing enormous crimes, or even from giving occaſion to ſuch groſs ſcandal as might diſguſt the minds of the people.

In the ſtate in which things were through the greater part of Europe during the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, and for ſome time both before and after that period, the conſtitution of the church of Rome may be conſidered as the moſt formidable combination that ever was formed againſt the authority and ſecurity of civil government, as well as againſt the liberty, reaſon, and happineſs of mankind, which can flouriſh only where civil government is able to protect them. In that conſtitution the groſſeſt

deluſions

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deluſions of ſuperſtition were ſupported in ſuch a manner by the private intereſts of ſo great a number of people as put them out of all danger from any aſſault of human reaſon; becauſe though human reaſon might perhaps have been able to unveil, even to the eyes of the common people, ſome of the deluſions of ſuperſtition; it could never have diſſolved the ties of private intereſt. Had this conſtitution been attacked by no other enemies but the feeble efforts of human reaſon, it muſt have endured for ever. But that immenſe and well-built fabric, which all the wiſdom and virtue of man could never have ſhaken, much leſs have overturned, was by the natural courſe of things, firſt weakened, and afterwards in part deſtroyed, and is now likely, in the courſe of a few centuries more, perhaps, to crumble into ruins altogether.

The gradual improvements of arts, manufactures, and commerce, the ſame cauſes which deſtroyed the power of the great barons, deſtroyed in the ſame manner, through the greater part of Europe, the whole temporal power of the clergy. In the produce of arts, manufactures, and commerce, the clergy, like the great barons, found ſomething for which they could exchange their rude produce, and thereby diſcover the means of ſpending their whole revenues upon their own perſons, without giving any conſiderable ſhare of them to other people. Their charity became gradually leſs extenſive, their hoſpitality leſs liberal or leſs profuſe. Their retainers became conſequently leſs numerous, and by degrees dwindled

dwindled away altogether. The clergy too, like the great barons, wiſhed to get a better rent from their landed eſtates, in order to ſpend it, in the ſame manner, upon the gratification of their own private vanity and folly. But this increaſe of rent could be got only by granting leaſes to their tenants, who thereby became in a great meaſure independent of them. The ties of intereſt, which bound the inferior ranks of people to the clergy, were in this manner gradually broken and diſſolved. They were even broken and diſſolved ſooner than thoſe which bound the ſame ranks of people to the great barons: becauſe the benefices of the church being, the greater part of them, much ſmaller than the eſtates of the great barons, the poſſeſſor of each benefice was much ſooner able to ſpend the whole of its revenue upon his own perſon. During the greater part of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the power of the great barons was, through the greater part of Europe, in full vigour. But the temporal power of the clergy, the abſolute command which they had once had over the great body of the people, was very much decayed. The power of the church was by that time very nearly reduced through the greater part of Europe to what aroſe from her ſpiritual authority; and even that ſpiritual authority was much weakened when it ceaſed to be ſupported by the charity and hoſpitality of the clergy. The inferior ranks of people no longer looked upon that order, as they had done before, as the comforters of their diſtreſs, and the relievers of their indigence. On the contrary,

contrary, they were provoked and diſguſted by the vanity, luxury, and expence of the richer clergy, who appeared to ſpend upon their own pleaſures what had always before been regarded as the patrimony of the poor.

In this ſituation of things, the ſovereigns in the different ſtates of Europe endeavoured to recover the influence which they had once had in the diſpoſal of the great benefices of the church, by procuring to the deans and chapters of each dioceſe the reſtoration of their ancient right of electing the biſhop, and to the monks of each abbacy that of electing the abbot. The re-eſtabliſhing of this ancient order was the object of ſeveral ſtatutes enacted in England during the courſe of the fourteenth century, particularly of what is called the ſtatute of proviſors; and of the Pragmatic ſanction eſtabliſhed in France in the fifteenth century. In order to render the election valid, it was neceſſary that the ſovereign ſhould both conſent to it before-hand, and afterwards approve of the perſon elected; and though the election was ſtill ſuppoſed to be free, he had, however, all the indirect means which his ſituation neceſſarily afforded him, of influencing the clergy in his own dominions. Other regulations of a ſimilar tendency were eſtabliſhed in other parts of Europe. But the power of the Pope in the collation of the great benefices of the church ſeems, before the Reformation, to have been nowhere ſo effectually and ſo univerſally reſtrained as in France and England. The Concordat afterwards, in the ſixteenth century, gave to the Kings

Kings of France the abſolute right of preſenting to all the great, or what are called the conſiſtorial benefices of the Gallican church.

Since the eſtabliſhment of the Pragmatic ſanction and of the Concordat, the clergy of France have in general ſhown leſs reſpect to the decrees of the papal court than the clergy of any other catholic country. In all the diſputes which their ſovereign has had with the Pope, they have almoſt conſtantly taken party with the former. This independency of the clergy of France upon the court of Rome, ſeems to be principally founded upon the Pragmatic ſanction and the Concordat. In the earlier periods of the monarchy, the clergy of France appear to have been as much devoted to the Pope as thoſe of any other country. When Robert, the ſecond prince of the Capetian race, was moſt unjuſtly excommunicated by the court of Rome, his own ſervants, it is ſaid, threw the victuals which came from his table to the dogs, and refuſed to taſte any thing themſelves which had been polluted by the contact of a perſon in his ſituation. They were taught to do ſo, it may very ſafely be preſumed, by the clergy of his own dominions.

The claim of collating to the great benefices of the church, a claim in defence of which the court of Rome had frequently ſhaken, and ſometimes overturned the thrones of ſome of the greateſt ſovereigns in Chriſtendom, was in this manner either reſtrained or modified, or given up altogether, in many different parts of Europe, even before the time of the Reformation. As the clergy

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clergy had now leſs influence over the people, ſo the ſtate had more influence over the clergy. The clergy therefore had both leſs power and leſs inclination to diſturb the ſtate.

The authority of the church of Rome was in this ſtate of declenſion, when the diſputes which gave birth to the Reformation, began in Germany, and ſoon ſpread themſelves through every part of Europe. The new doctrines were every where received with a high degree of popular favour. They were propagated with all that enthuſiaſtic zeal which commonly animates the ſpirit of party, when it attacks eſtabliſhed authority. The teachers of thoſe doctrines, though perhaps in other reſpects not more learned than many of the divines who defended the eſtabliſhed church, ſeem in general to have been better acquainted with eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, and with the origin and progreſs of that ſyſtem of opinions upon which the authority of the church was eſtabliſhed, and they had thereby ſome advantage in almoſt every diſpute. The auſterity of their manners gave them authority with the common people, who contraſted the ſtrict regularity of their conduct with the diſorderly lives of the greater part of their own clergy. They poſſeſſed too in a much higher degree than their adverſaries, all the arts of popularity and of gaining proſelytes, arts which the lofty and dignified ſons of the church had long neglected, as being to them in a great meaſure uſeleſs. The reaſon of the new doctrines recommended them to ſome, their novelty to many; the hatred and contempt of the eſtabliſhed

clergy to a ſtill greater number; but the zealous, paſſionate, and fanatical, though frequently coarſe and ruſtic, eloquence with which they were almoſt every where inculcated, recommended them to by far the greateſt number. CHAP. I.

The ſucceſs of the new doctrines was almoſt every where ſo great, that the princes who at that time happened to be on bad terms with the court of Rome, were by means of them eaſily enabled, in their own dominions, to overturn the church, which, having loſt the reſpect and veneration of the inferior ranks of people, could make ſcarce any reſiſtance. The court of Rome had diſobliged ſome of the ſmaller princes in the northern parts of Germany, whom it had probably conſidered as too inſignificant to be worth the managing. They univerſally, therefore, eſtabliſhed the reformation in their own dominions. The tyranny of Chriſtiern II. and of Troll Archbiſhop of Upſal, enabled Guſtavus Vaſa to expel them both from Sweden. The Pope favoured the tyrant and the archbiſhop, and Guſtavus Vaſa found no difficulty in eſtabliſhing the reformation in Sweden. Chriſtiern II. was afterwards depoſed from the throne of Denmark, where his conduct had rendered him as odious as in Sweden. The Pope, however, was ſtill diſpoſed to favour him, and Frederic of Holſtein, who had mounted the throne in his ſtead, revenged himſelf by following the example of Guſtavus Vaſa. The magiſtrates of Berne and Zurich, who had no particular quarrel with the Pope, eſtabliſhed with great eaſe the reformation in their reſpective cantons,

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cantons, where juſt before ſome of the clergy had, by an impoſture ſomewhat groſſer than ordinary, rendered the whole order both odious and contemptible.

In this critical ſituation of its affairs, the papal court was at ſufficient pains to cultivate the friendſhip of the powerful ſovereigns of France and Spain, of whom the latter was at that time Emperor of Germany. With their aſſiſtance it was enabled, though not without great difficulty and much bloodſhed, either to ſuppreſs altogether, or to obſtruct very much the progreſs of the reformation in their dominions. It was well enough inclined too to be complaiſant to the King of England. But from the circumſtances of the times, it could not be ſo without giving offence to a ſtill greater ſovereign, Charles V. King of Spain and Emperor of Germany. Henry VIII. accordingly, though he did not embrace himſelf the greater part of the doctrines of the reformation, was yet enabled, by their general prevalence, to ſuppreſs all the monaſteries, and to aboliſh the authority of the church of Rome in his dominions. That he ſhould go ſo far, though he went no further, gave ſome ſatisfaction to the patrons of the reformation, who, having got poſſeſſion of the government in the reign of his ſon and ſucceſſor, completed without any difficulty the work which Henry VIII. had begun.

In ſome countries, as in Scotland, where the government was weak, unpopular, and not very firmly eſtabliſhed, the reformation was ſtrong enough to overturn, not only the church, but

the ſtate likewiſe for attempting to ſupport the church. CHAP. I.

Among the followers of the reformation, diſperſed in all the different countries of Europe, there was no general tribunal, which, like that of the court of Rome, or an œcumenical council, could ſettle all diſputes among them, and with irreſiſtible authority preſcribe to all of them the preciſe limits of orthodoxy. When the followers of the reformation in one country, therefore, happened to differ from their brethren in another, as they had no common judge to appeal to, the diſpute could never be decided; and many ſuch diſputes aroſe among them. Thoſe concerning the government of the church, and the right of conferring eccleſiaſtical benefices, were perhaps the moſt intereſting to the peace and welfare of civil ſociety. They gave birth accordingly to the two principal parties or ſects among the followers of the reformation, the Lutheran and Calviniſtic ſects, the only ſects among them, of which the doctrine and diſcipline have ever yet been eſtabliſhed by law in any part of Europe.

The followers of Luther, together with what is called the Church of England, preſerved more or leſs of the epiſcopal government, eſtabliſhed ſubordination among the clergy, gave the ſovereign the diſpoſal of all the biſhoprics, and other conſiſtorial benefices within his dominions, and thereby rendered him the real head of the church; and without depriving the biſhop of the right of collating to the ſmaller benefices within his dioceſe, they, even to thoſe benefices, not only

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only admitted, but favoured the right of preſentation both in the ſovereign and in all other lay-patrons. This ſyſtem of church government was from the beginning favourable to peace and good order, and to ſubmiſſion to the civil ſovereign. It has never, accordingly, been the occaſion of any tumult or civil commotion in any country in which it has once been eſtabliſhed. The church of England in particular has always valued herſelf, with great reaſon, upon the unexceptionable loyalty of her principles. Under ſuch a government the clergy naturally endeavour to recommend themſelves to the ſovereign, to the court, and to the nobility and gentry of the country, by whoſe influence they chiefly expect to obtain preferment. They pay court to thoſe patrons, ſometimes, no doubt, by the vileſt flattery and aſſentation, but frequently too by cultivating all thoſe arts which beſt deſerve, and which are therefore moſt likely to gain them the eſteem of people of rank and fortune; by their knowledge in all the different branches of uſeful and ornamental learning, by the decent liberality of their manners, by the ſocial good humour of their converſation, and by their avowed contempt of thoſe abſurd and hypocritical auſterities which fanatics inculcate and pretend to practiſe, in order to draw upon themſelves the veneration, and upon the greater part of men of rank and fortune, who avow that they do not practiſe them, the abhorrence of the common people. Such a clergy, however, while they pay their court in this manner to the higher ranks of life, are very

apt to neglect altogether the means of maintaining their influence and authority with the lower. They are liſtened to, eſteemed and reſpected by their ſuperiors; but before their inferiors they are frequently incapable of defending, effectually and to the conviction of ſuch hearers, their own ſober and moderate doctrines againſt the moſt ignorant enthuſiaſt who chuſes to attack them.

The followers of Zuinglius, or more properly thoſe of Calvin, on the contrary, beſtowed upon the people of each pariſh, whenever the church became vacant, the right of electing their own paſtor; and eſtabliſhed at the ſame time the moſt perfect equality among the clergy. The former part of this inſtitution, as long as it remained in vigour, ſeems to have been productive of nothing but diſorder and confuſion, and to have tended equally to corrupt the morals both of the clergy and of the people. The latter part ſeems never to have had any effects but what were perfectly agreeable.

As long as the people of each pariſh preſerved the right of electing their own paſtors, they acted almoſt always under the influence of the clergy, and generally of the moſt factious and fanatical of the order. The clergy, in order to preſerve their influence in thoſe popular elections, became, or affected to become, many of them, fanatics themſelves, encouraged fanaticiſm among the people, and gave the preference almoſt always to the moſt fanatical candidate. So ſmall a matter as the appointment of a pariſh prieſt occaſioned almoſt always a violent conteſt, not

only in one parish, but in all the neighbouring parishes, who seldom failed to take part in the quarrel. When the parish happened to be situated in a great city, it divided all the inhabitants into two parties; and when that city happened either to constitute itself a little republic, or to be the head and capital of a little republic, as is the case with many of the considerable cities in Switzerland and Holland, every paltry dispute of this kind, over and above exasperating the animosity of all their other factions, threatened to leave behind it both a new schism in the church, and a new faction in the state. In those small republics, therefore, the magistrate very soon found it necessary, for the sake of preserving the public peace, to assume to himself the right of presenting to all vacant benefices. In Scotland, the most extensive country in which this presbyterian form of church government has ever been established, the rights of patronage were in effect abolished by the act which established presbytery in the beginning of the reign of William III. That act at least put it in the power of certain classes of people in each parish, to purchase, for a very small price, the right of electing their own pastor. The constitution which this act established was allowed to subsist for about two and twenty years, but was abolished by the 10th of Queen Anne, ch. 12. on account of the confusions and disorders which this more popular mode of election had almost every where occasioned. In so extensive a country as Scotland, however, a tumult in a remote

parish was not so likely to give disturbance to government, as in a smaller state. The 10th of Queen Anne restored the rights of patronage. But though in Scotland the law gives the benefice without any exception to the person presented by the patron; yet the church requires sometimes (for she has not in this respect been very uniform in her decisions) a certain concurrence of the people, before she will confer upon the presentee what is called the cure of souls, or the ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the parish. She sometimes at least, from an affected concern for the peace of the parish, delays the settlement till this concurrence can be procured. The private tampering of some of the neighbouring clergy, sometimes to procure, but more frequently to prevent this concurrence, and the popular arts which they cultivate in order to enable them upon such occasions to tamper more effectally, are perhaps the causes which principally keep up whatever remains of the old fanatical spirit, either in the clergy, or in the people of Scotland.

The equality which the presbyterian form of church government establishes among the clergy, consists, first, in the equality of authority or ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and, secondly, in the equality of benefice. In all presbyterian churches the equality of authority is perfect: that of benefice is not so. The difference, however, between one benefice and another, is seldom so considerable as commonly to tempt the possessor even of the small one to pay court to his patron, by the vile arts of flattery and assentation, in

order to get a better. In all the preſbyterian churches, where the rights of patronage are thoroughly eſtabliſhed, it is by nobler and better arts that the eſtabliſhed clergy in general endeavour to gain the favour of their ſuperiors; by their learning, by the irreproachable regularity of their life, and by the faithful and diligent diſcharge of their duty. Their patrons even frequently complain of the independency of their ſpirit, which they are apt to conſtrue into ingratitude for paſt favours, but which at worſt, perhaps, is ſeldom any more than that indifference which naturally ariſes from the conſcioufneſs that no further favours of the kind are ever to be expected. There is ſcarce perhaps to be found any where in Europe a more learned, decent, independent, and reſpectable ſet of men, than the greater part of the preſbyterian clergy of Holland, Geneva, Switzerland, and Scotland.

Where the church benefices are all nearly equal, none of them can be very great, and this mediocrity of benefice, though it may no doubt be carried too far, has, however, ſome very agreeable effects. Nothing but the moſt exemplary morals can give dignity to a man of ſmall fortune. The vices of levity and vanity neceſſarily render him ridiculous, and are, beſides, almoſt as ruinous to him as they are to the common people. In his own conduct, therefore, he is obliged to follow that ſyſtem of morals which the common people reſpect the moſt. He gains their eſteem and affection by that plan of life which his own intereſt and ſituation would lead him to follow.

The

The common people look upon him with that kindneſs with which we naturally regard one who approaches ſomewhat to our own condition, but who, we think, ought to be in a higher. Their kindneſs naturally provokes his kindneſs. He becomes careful to inſtruct them, and attentive to aſſiſt and relieve them. He does not even deſpiſe the prejudices of people who are diſpoſed to be ſo favourable to him, and never treats them with thoſe contemptuous and arrogant airs which we ſo often meet with in the proud dignitaries of opulent and well-endowed churches. The preſbyterian clergy, accordingly, have more influence over the minds of the common people than perhaps the clergy of any other eſtabliſhed church. It is accordingly in preſbyterian countries only that we ever find the common people converted, without perſecution, completely, and almoſt to a man, to the eſtabliſhed church. CHAP. I.

In countries where church benefices are the greater part of them very moderate, a chair in a univerſity is generally a better eſtabliſhment than a church benefice. The univerſities have, in this caſe, the picking and chuſing of their members from all the churchmen of the country, who, in every country, conſtitute by far the moſt numerous claſs of men of letters. Where church benefices, on the contrary, are many of them very conſiderable, the church naturally draws from the univerſities the greater part of their eminent men of letters; who generally find ſome patron who does himſelf honour by procuring them church preferment. In the former ſituation we

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are likely to find the univerſities filled with the moſt eminent men of letters that are to be found in the country. In the latter we are likely to find few eminent men among them, and thoſe few among the youngeſt members of the ſociety, who are likely too to be drained away from it, before they can have acquired experience and knowledge enough to be of much uſe to it. It is obſerved by Mr. de Voltaire, that Father Porrée, a jeſuit of no great eminence in the republic of letters, was the only profeſſor they had ever had in France whoſe works were worth the reading. In a country which has produced ſo many eminent men of letters, it muſt appear ſomewhat ſingular, that ſcarce one of them ſhould have been a profeſſor in a univerſity. The famous Gaſſendi was, in the beginning of his life, a profeſſor in the univerſity of Aix. Upon the firſt dawning of his genius, it was repreſented to him, that by going into the church he could eaſily find a much more quiet and comfortable ſubſiſtence, as well as a better ſituation for purſuing his ſtudies; and he immediately followed the advice. The obſervation of Mr. de Voltaire may be applied, I believe, not only to France, but to all other Roman catholic countries. We very rarely find, in any of them, an eminent man of letters who is a profeſſor in a univerſity, except, perhaps, in the profeſſions of law and phyſic; profeſſions from which the church is not ſo likely to draw them. After the church of Rome, that of England is by far the richeſt and beſt endowed church in Chriſtendom. In England, accordingly,

ingly, the church is continually draining the univerſities of all their beſt and ableſt members; and an old college tutor, who is known and diſtinguiſhed in Europe as an eminent man of letters, is as rarely to be found there as in any Roman catholic country. In Geneva, on the contrary, in the proteſtant cantons of Switzerland, in the proteſtant countries of Germany, in Holland, in Scotland, in Sweden, and Denmark, the moſt eminent men of letters whom thoſe countries have produced, have, not all indeed, but the far greater part of them, been profeſſors in univerſities. In thoſe countries the univerſities are continually draining the church of all its moſt eminent men of letters.

It may, perhaps, be worth while to remark, that, if we except the poets, a few orators, and a few hiſtorians, the far greater part of the other eminent men of letters, both of Greece and Rome, appear to have been either public or private teachers; generally either of philoſophy or of rhetoric. This remark will be found to hold true from the days of Lyſias and Iſocrates, of Plato and Ariſtotle, down to thoſe of Plutarch and Epictetus, of Suetonius and Quintilian. To impoſe upon any man the neceſſity of teaching, year after year, any particular branch of ſcience, ſeems, in reality, to be the moſt effectual method for rendering him completely maſter of it himſelf. By being obliged to go every year over the ſame ground, if he is good for any thing, he neceſſarily becomes, in a few years, well acquainted with every part of it: and

if

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if upon any particular point he ſhould form too haſty an opinion one year, when he comes in the courſe of his lectures to re-conſider the ſame ſubject the year thereafter, he is very likely to correct it. As to be a teacher of ſcience is certainly the natural employment of a mere man of letters; ſo is it likewiſe, perhaps, the education which is moſt likely to render him a man of ſolid learning and knowledge. The mediocrity of church benefices naturally tends to draw the greater part of men of letters, in the country where it takes place, to the employment in which they can be the moſt uſeful to the public, and, at the ſame time, to give them the beſt education, perhaps, they are capable of receiving. It tends to render their learning both as ſolid as poſſible, and as uſeful as poſſible.

The revenue of every eſtabliſhed church, ſuch parts of it excepted as may ariſe from particular lands or manors, is a branch, it ought to be obſerved, of the general revenue of the ſtate, which is thus diverted to a purpoſe very different from the defence of the ſtate. The tythe, for example, is a real land-tax, which puts it out of the power of the proprietors of land to contribute ſo largely towards the defence of the ſtate as they otherwiſe might be able to do. The rent of land, however, is, according to ſome, the ſole fund, and according to others, the principal fund, from which, in all great monarchies, the exigencies of the ſtate muſt be ultimately ſupplied. The more of this fund that is given to the church, the leſs, it is evident, can be ſpared

ſpared to the ſtate. It may be laid down as a certain maxim, that, all other things being ſuppoſed equal, the richer the church, the poorer muſt neceſſarily be, either the ſovereign on the one hand, or the people on the other; and, in all caſes, the leſs able muſt the ſtate be to defend itſelf. In ſeveral proteſtant countries, particularly in all the proteſtant cantons of Switzerland, the revenue which anciently belonged to the Roman catholic church, the tythes and church lands, has been found a fund ſufficient, not only to afford competent ſalaries to the eſtabliſhed clergy, but to defray, with little or no addition, all the other expences of the ſtate. The magiſtrates of the powerful canton of Berne, in particular, have accumulated out of the ſavings from this fund a very large ſum, ſuppoſed to amount to ſeveral millions, part of which is depoſited in a public treaſure, and part is placed at intereſt in what are called the public funds of the different indebted nations of Europe; chiefly in thoſe of France and Great Britain. What may be the amount of the whole expence which the church, either of Berne, or of any other proteſtant canton, coſts the ſtate, I do not pretend to know. By a very exact account it appears, that, in 1755, the whole revenue of the clergy of the church of Scotland, including their glebe or church lands, and the rent of their manſes or dwelling-houſes, eſtimated according to a reaſonable valuation, amounted only to 68,514l. 1s. 5 1/12d. This very moderate revenue affords

affords a decent ſubſiſtence to nine hundred and forty-four miniſters. The whole expence of the church, including what is occaſionally laid out for the building and reparation of churches, and of the manſes of miniſters, cannot well ba ſuppoſed to exceed eighty or eighty-five thouſand pounds a-year. The moſt opulent church in Chriſtendom does not maintain better the uniformity of faith, the fervour of devotion, the ſpirit of order, regularity, and uſtere morals in the great body of the people, than this very poorly endowed church of Scotland. All the good effects, both civil and religious, which an eſtabliſhed church can be ſuppoſed to produce, are produced by it as completely as by any other. The greater part of the proteſtant churches of Switzerland, which in general are not better endowed than the church of Scotland, produce thoſe effects in a ſtill higher degree. In the greater part of the proteſtant cantons, there is not a ſingle perſon to be found who does not profeſs himſelf to be of the eſtabliſhed church. If he profeſſes himſelf to be of any other, indeed, the law obliges him to leave the canton. But ſo ſevere, or rather indeed ſo oppreſſive a law, could never have been executed in ſuch free countries, had not the diligence of the clergy before-hand converted to the eſtabliſhed church the whole body of the people, with the exception of, perhaps, a few individuals only. In ſome parts of Switzerland, accordingly, where, from the accidental union of a proteſtant and Roman

Roman catholic country, the converſion has not been ſo complete, both religions are not only tolerated, but eſtabliſhed by law. CHAP. I.

The proper performance of every ſervice ſeems to require that its pay or recompence ſhould be, as exactly as poſſible, proportioned to the nature of the ſervice. If any ſervice is very much under-paid, it is very apt to ſuffer by the meanneſs and incapacity of the greater part of thoſe who are employed in it. If it is very much over-paid, it is apt to ſuffer, perhaps, ſtill more by their negligence and idleneſs. A man of a large revenue, whatever may be his profeſſion, thinks he ought to live like other men of large revenues; and to ſpend a great part of his time in feſtivity, in vanity, and in diſſipation. But in a clergyman this train of life not only conſumes the time which ought to be employed in the duties of his function, but in the eyes of the common people deſtroys almoſt entirely that ſanctity of character which can alone enable him to perform thoſe duties with proper weight and authority.

PART FOURTH.

Of the Expence of ſupporting the Dignity of the Sovereign.

OVER and above the expences neceſſary for enabling the ſovereign to perform his ſeveral duties, a certain expence is requiſite for the ſupport of his dignity. This expence varies both

both with the different periods of improvement, and with the different forms of government.

In an opulent and improved ſociety, where all the different orders of people are growing every day more expenſive in their houſes, in their furniture, in their tables, in their dreſs, and in their equipage; it cannot well be expected that the ſovereign ſhould alone hold out againſt the faſhion. He naturally, therefore, or rather neceſſarily becomes more expenſive in all thoſe different articles too. His dignity even ſeems to require that he ſhould become ſo.

As in point of dignity, a monarch is more raiſed above his ſubjects than the chief magiſtrate of any republic is ever ſuppoſed to be above his fellow citizens; ſo a greater expence is neceſſary for ſupporting that higher dignity. We naturally expect more ſplendor in the court of a king, than in the manſion-houſe of a doge or burgo-maſter.

Conclusion.

THE expence of defending the ſociety, and that of ſupporting the dignity of the chief magiſtrate, are both laid out for the general benefit of the whole ſociety. It is reaſonable, therefore, that they ſhould be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole ſociety, all the different members contributing, as nearly as poſſible, in proportion to their reſpective abilities.

The expence of the adminiſtration of juſtice too, may, no doubt, be conſidered as laid out for the benefit of the whole ſociety. There is no impro-

impropriety, therefore, in its being defrayed by the general contribution of the whole ſociety. The perſons, however, who give occaſion to this expence are thoſe who, by their injuſtice in one way or another, make it neceſſary to ſeek redreſs or protection from the courts of juſtice. The perſons again moſt immediately benefited by this expence, are thoſe whom the courts of juſtice either reſtore to their rights, or maintain in their rights. The expence of the adminiſtration of juſtice, therefore, may very properly be defrayed by the particular contribution of one or other, or both of thoſe two different ſets of perſons, according as different occaſions may require, that is, by the fees of court. It cannot be neceſſary to have recourſe to the general contribution of the whole ſociety, except for the conviction of thoſe criminals who have not themſelves any eſtate or fund ſufficient for paying thoſe fees.

Thoſe local or provincial expences of which the benefit is local or provincial (what is laid out, for example, upon the police of a particular town or diſtrict) ought to be defrayed by a local or provincial revenue, and ought to be no burden upon the general revenue of the ſociety. It is unjuſt that the whole ſociety ſhould contribute towards an expence of which the benefit is confined to a part of the ſociety.

The expence of maintaining good roads and communications is, no doubt, beneficial to the whole ſociety, and may, therefore, without any injuſtice, be defrayed by the general contribution

tion of the whole ſociety. This expence, however, is moſt immediately and directly beneficial to thoſe who travel or carry goods from one place to another, and to thoſe who conſume ſuch goods. The turnpike tolls in England, and the duties called peages in other countries, lay it altogether upon thoſe two different ſets of people, and thereby diſcharge the general revenue of the ſociety from a very conſiderable burden.

The expence of the inſtitutions for education and religious inſtruction, is likewiſe, no doubt, beneficial to the whole ſociety, and may, therefore, without injuſtice, be defrayed by the general contribution of the whole ſociety. This expence, however, might perhaps with equal propriety, and even with ſome advantage, be defrayed altogether by thoſe who receive the immediate benefit of ſuch education and inſtruction, or by the voluntary contribution of thoſe who think they have occaſion for either the one or the other.

When the inſtitutions or public works which are beneficial to the whole ſociety, either cannot be maintained altogether, or are not maintained altogether by the contribution of ſuch particular members of the ſociety as are moſt immediately benefited by them, the deficiency muſt, in moſt caſes, be made up by the general contribution of the whole ſociety. The general revenue of the ſociety, over and above defraying the expence of defending the ſociety, and of ſupporting the dignity of the chief magiſtrate, muſt make up for the

the deficiency of many particular branches of revenue. The ſources of this general or public revenue, I ſhall endeavour to expain in the following chapter. CHAP. I.

CHAP. II.

Of the Sources of the general or public Revenue of the Society.

THE revenue which muſt defray, not only the expence of defending the ſociety and of ſupporting the dignity of the chief magiſtrate, but all the other neceſſary expences of government, for which the conſtitution of the ſtate has not provided any particular revenue, may be drawn, either, firſt, from ſome fund which peculiarly belongs to the ſovereign or commonwealth, and which is independent of the revenue of the people; or, ſecondly, from the revenue of the people. CHAP. II.

PART FIRST.

Of the Funds or Sources of Revenue which may peculiarly belong to the Sovereign or Commonwealth.

THE funds or ſources of revenue which may peculiarly belong to the ſovereign or commonwealth muſt conſiſt, either in ſtock, or in land.

The ſovereign, like any other owner of ſtock, may derive a revenue from it, either by employing it himſelf, or by lending it. His revenue is in the one caſe profit, in the other intereſt.

The revenue of a Tartar or Arabian chief conſiſts in profit. It ariſes principally from the milk and increaſe of his own herds and flocks, of which he himſelf ſuperintends the management, and is the principal ſhepherd or herdſman of his own horde or tribe. It is, however, in this earlieſt and rudeſt ſtate of civil government only that profit has ever made the principal part of the public revenue of a monarchical ſtate.

Small republics have ſometimes derived a conſiderable revenue from the profit of mercantile projects. The republic of Hamburgh is ſaid to do ſo from the profits of a public wine cellar and apothecary's ſhop*. The ſtate cannot be very great of which the ſovereign has leiſure to carry on the trade of a wine merchant or apothecary. The profit of a public bank has been a ſource of revenue to more conſiderable ſtates. It has been ſo not only to Hamburgh, but to Venice and Amſterdam. A revenue of this kind has even by ſome people been thought not below

* See Memoires concernant les Droits & Impoſitions in Europe; tom. i. page 73. This work was compiled by the order of the Court for the uſe of a commiſſion employed for ſome years paſt in conſidering the proper means for reforming the finances of France. The account of the French taxes, which takes up three volumes in quarto, may be regarded as perfectly authentic. That of thoſe of other European nations was compiled from ſuch informations as the French miniſters at the different courts could procure. It is much ſhorter, and probably not quite ſo exact as that of the French taxes.

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the attention of ſo great an empire as that of Great Britain. Reckoning the ordinary dividend of the bank of England at five and a half per cent. and its capital at ten millions ſeven hundred and eighty thouſand pounds, the neat annual profit, after paying the expence of management, muſt amount, it is ſaid, to five hundred and ninety-two thouſand nine hundred pounds. Government, it is pretended, could borrow this capital at three per cent. intereſt, and by taking the management of the bank into its own hands, might make a clear profit of two hundred and ſixty-nine thouſand five hundred pounds a year. The orderly, vigilant, and parſimonious adminiſtration of ſuch ariſtocracies as thoſe of Venice and Amſterdam, is extremely proper, it appears from experience, for the management of a mercantile project of this kind. But whether ſuch a government as that of England; which, whatever may be its virtues, has never been famous for good œconomy; which, in time of peace, has generally conducted itſelf with the ſlothful and negligent profuſion that is perhaps natural to monarchies; and in time of war has conſtantly acted with all the thoughtleſs extravagance that democracies are apt to fall into; could be ſafely truſted with the management of ſuch a project, muſt at leaſt be a good deal more doubtful. CHAP. II.

The poſt office is properly a mercantile project. The government advances the expence of eſtabliſhing the different offices, and of buying or

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hiring the neceſſary horſes or carriages, and is repaid with a large profit by the duties upon what is carried. It is perhaps the only mercantile project which has been ſucceſsfully managed by, I believe, every ſort of government. The capital to be advanced is not very conſiderable. There is no myſtery in the buſineſs. The returns are not only certain, but immediate.

Princes, however, have frequently engaged in many other mercantile projects, and have been willing, like private perſons, to mend their fortunes by becoming adventurers in the common branches of trade. They have ſcarce ever ſucceeded. The profuſion with which the affairs of princes are always managed, renders it almoſt impoſſible that they ſhould. The agents of a prince regard the wealth of their maſter as inexhauſtible; are careleſs at what price they buy; are careleſs at what price they ſell; are careleſs at what expence they tranſport his goods from one place to another. Thoſe agents frequently live with the profuſion of princes, and ſometimes too, in ſpite of that profuſion, and by a proper method of making up their accounts, acquire the fortunes of princes. It was thus, as we are told by Machiavel, that the agents of Lorenzo of Medicis, not a prince of mean abilities, carried on his trade. The republic of Florence was ſeveral times obliged to pay the debt into which their extravagance had involved him. He found it convenient, accordingly, to give up the buſineſs of merchant, the buſineſs,

to

to which his family had originally owed their fortune, and in the latter part of his life to employ both what remained of that fortune, and the revenue of the ſtate of which he had the diſpoſal, in projects and expences more ſuitable to his ſtation.

No two characters ſeem more inconſiſtent than thoſe of trader and ſovereign. If the trading ſpirit of the Engliſh Eaſt India company renders them very bad ſovereigns; the ſpirit of ſovereignty ſeems to have rendered them equally bad traders. While they were traders only, they managed their trade ſucceſsfully, and were able to pay from their profits a moderate dividend to the proprietors of their ſtock. Since they became ſovereigns, with a revenue which, it is ſaid, was originally more than three millions ſterling, they have been obliged to beg the extraordinary aſſiſtance of government in order to avoid immediate bankruptcy. In their former ſituation, their ſervants in India conſidered themſelves as the clerks of merchants: in their preſent ſituation, thoſe ſervants conſider themſelves as the miniſters of ſovereigns.

A ſtate may ſometimes derive ſome part of its public revenue from the intereſt of money, as well as from the profits of ſtock. If it has amaſſed a treaſure, it may lend a part of that treaſure, either to foreign ſtates, or to its own ſubjects.

The canton of Berne derives a conſiderable revenue by lending a part of its treaſure to foreign ſtates; that is, by placing it in the public funds of the different indebted nations of Eu-

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rope, chiefly in thoſe of France and England. The ſecurity of this revenue muſt depend, firſt, upon the ſecurity of the funds in which it is placed, or upon the good faith of the government which has the management of them; and, ſecondly, upon the certainty or probability of the continuance of peace with the debtor nation. In the caſe of a war, the very firſt act of hoſtility, on the part of the debtor nation, might be the forfeiture of the funds of its creditor. This policy of lending money to foreign ſtates is, ſo far as I know, peculiar to the canton of Berne.

The city of Hamburgh * has eſtabliſhed a ſort of public pawn-ſhop, which lends money to the ſubjects of the ſtate upon pledges at ſix per cent. intereſt. This pawn-ſhop or Lombard, as it is called, affords a revenue, it is pretended, to the ſtate of a hundred and fifty thouſand crowns, which, at four-and-ſixpence the crown amounts to 33,750 *l.* ſterling.

The government of Pennſylvania, without amaſſing any treaſure, invented a method of lending, not money indeed, but what is equivalent to money, to its ſubjects. By advancing to private people, at intereſt, and upon land ſecurity to double the value, paper bills of credit to be redeemed fifteen years after their date, and in the mean time made transferrable from hand to hand like bank notes, and declared by act of aſſembly to be a legal tender in all payments from one inhabitant of the province to another, it

* See Memoires concernant les Droits & Impoſitions en Europe; tome i. p. 73.

raiſed

raiſed a moderate revenue, which went a con- CHAP. II.
ſiderable way towards defraying an annual expence of about 4,500*l.* the whole ordinary expence of that frugal and orderly government. The ſucceſs of an expedient of this kind muſt have depended upon three different circumſtances; firſt, upon the demand for ſome other inſtrument of commerce, beſides gold and ſilver money; or upon the demand for ſuch a quantity of conſumable ſtock, as could not be had without ſending abroad the greater part of their gold and ſilver money, in order to purchaſe it; ſecondly, upon the good credit of the government which made uſe of this expedient; and, thirdly, upon the moderation with which it was uſed, the whole value of the paper bills of credit never exceeding that of the gold and ſilver money which would have been neceſſary for carrying on their circulation, had there been no paper bills of credit. The ſame expedient was upon different occaſions adopted by ſeveral other American colonies: but, from want of this moderation, it produced, in the greater part of them, much more diſorder than conveniency.

The unſtable and periſhable nature of ſtock and credit, however, render them unfit to be truſted to, as the principal funds of that ſure, ſteady and permanent revenue, which can alone give ſecurity and dignity to government. The government of no great nation, that was advanced beyond the ſhepherd ſtate, ſeems ever to have derived the greater part of its public revenue from ſuch ſources.

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Land is a fund of a more ſtable and permanent nature; and the rent of public lands, accordingly, has been the principal ſource of the public revenue of many a great nation that was much advanced beyond the ſhepherd ſtate. From the produce or rent of the public lands, the ancient republics of Greece and Italy derived, for a long time, the greater part of that revenue which defrayed the neceſſary expences of the commonwealth. The rent of the crown lands conſtituted for a long time the greater part of the revenue of the ancient ſovereigns of Europe.

War and the preparation for war, are the two circumſtances which in modern times occaſion the greater part of the neceſſary expence of all great ſtates. But in the ancient republics of Greece and Italy every citizen was a ſoldier, who both ſerved and prepared himſelf for ſervice at his own expence. Neither of thoſe two circumſtances, therefore, could occaſion any very conſiderable expence to the ſtate. The rent of a very moderate landed eſtate might be fully ſufficient for defraying all the other neceſſary expences of government.

In the ancient monarchies of Europe, the manners and cuſtoms of the times ſufficiently prepared the great body of the people for war; and when they took the field, they were, by the condition of their feudal tenures, to be maintained, either at their own expence, or at that of their immediate lords, without bringing any new charge upon the ſovereign. The other expences

pences of government were, the greater part of them, very moderate. The adminiſtration of juſtice, it has been ſhown, inſtead of being a cauſe of expence, was a ſource of revenue. The labour of the country people, for three days before and for three days after harveſt, was thought a fund ſufficient for making and maintaining all the bridges, highways, and other public works which the commerce of the country was ſuppoſed to require. In thoſe days the principal expence of the ſovereign ſeems to have conſiſted in the maintenance of his own family and houſhold. The officers of his houſhold, accordingly, were then the great officers of ſtate. The lord treaſurer received his rents. The lord ſteward and lord chamberlain looked after the expence of his family. The care of his ſtables was committed to the lord conſtable and the lord marſhal. His houſes were all built in the form of caſtles, and ſeem to have been the principal fortreſſes which he poſſeſſed. The keepers of thoſe houſes or caſtles might be conſidered as a ſort of military governors. They ſeem to have been the only military officers whom it was neceſſary to maintain in time of peace. In theſe circumſtances the rent of a great landed eſtate might, upon ordinary occaſions, very well defray all the neceſſary expences of government.

In the preſent ſtate of the greater part of the civilized monarchies of Europe, the rent of all the lands in the country, managed as they probably would be if they all belonged to one proprietor, would ſcarce perhaps amount to the ordinary

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ordinary revenue which they levy upon the people even in peaceable times. The ordinary revenue of Great Britain, for example, including not only what is neceſſary for defraying the current expence of the year, but for paying the intereſt of the public debts, and for ſinking a part of the capital of thoſe debts, amounts to upwards of ten millions a year. But the land tax, at four ſhillings in the pound, falls ſhort of two millions a year. This land tax, as it is called, however, is ſuppoſed to be one-fifth, not only of the rent of all the land, but of that of all the houſes, and of the intereſt of all the capital ſtock of Great Britain, that part of it only excepted which is either lent to the public, or employed as farming ſtock in the cultivation of land. A very conſiderable part of the produce of this tax ariſes from the rent of houſes, and the intereſt of capital ſtock. The land-tax of the city of London, for example, at four ſhillings in the pound, amounts to 123,399*l.* 6*s.* 7*d.* That of the city of Weſtminſter, to 63,092*l.* 1*s.* 5*d.* That of the palaces of Whitehall and St. James's, to 30,754*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.* A certain proportion of the land tax is in the ſame manner aſſeſſed upon all the other cities and towns corporate in the kingdom, and ariſes almoſt altogether, either from the rent of houſes, or from what is ſuppoſed to be the intereſt of trading and capital ſtock. According to the eſtimation, therefore, by which Great Britain is rated to the land-tax, the whole maſs of revenue ariſing from the rent of all the lands, from that of all the houſes, and from the intereſt

intereſt of all the capital ſtock, that part of it only excepted which is either lent to the public, or employed in the cultivation of land, does not exceed ten millions ſterling a year, the ordinary revenue which government levies upon the people even in peaceable times. The eſtimation by which Great Britain is rated to the land-tax is, no doubt, taking the whole kingdom at an average, very much below the real value; though in ſeveral particular counties and diſtricts it is ſaid to be nearly equal to that value. The rent of the lands alone, excluſive of that of houſes, and of the intereſt of ſtock, has by many people been eſtimated at twenty millions, an eſtimaton made in a great meaſure at random, and which, I apprehend, is as likely to be above as below the truth. But if the lands of Great Britain, in the preſent ſtate of their cultivation, do not afford a rent of more than twenty millions a year, they could not well afford the half, moſt probably not the fourth part of that rent, if they all belonged to a ſingle proprietor, and were put under the negligent, expenſive, and oppreſſive management of his factors and agents. The crown lands of Great Britain do not at preſent afford the fourth part of the rent, which could probably be drawn from them if they were the property of private perſons. If the crown lands were more extenſive, it is probable they would be ſtill worſe managed.

The revenue which the great body of the people derives from land is in proportion, not to

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to the rent, but to the produce of the land. The whole annual produce of the land of every country, if we except what is reſerved for ſeed, is either annually conſumed by the great body of the people, or exchanged for ſomething elſe that is conſumed by them. Whatever keeps down the produce of the land below what it would otherwiſe riſe to, keeps down the revenue of the great body of the people, ſtill more than it does that of the proprietors of land. The rent of land, that portion of the produce which belongs to the proprietors, is ſcarce anywhere in Great Britain ſuppoſed to be more than a third part of the whole produce. If the land, which in one ſtate of cultivation affords a rent of ten millions ſterling a year, would in another afford a rent of twenty millions; the rent being, in both caſes, ſuppoſed a third part of the produce; the revenue of the proprietors would be leſs than it otherwiſe might be by ten millions a year only; but the revenue of the great body of the people would be leſs than it otherwiſe might be by thirty millions a year, deducting only what would be neceſſary for ſeed. The population of the country would be leſs by the number of people which thirty millions a year, deducting always the ſeed, could maintain, according to the particular mode of living and expence which might take place in the different ranks of men among whom the remainder was diſtributed.

Though there is not at preſent, in Europe, any civilized ſtate of any kind which derives the

greater part of its public revenue from the rent of lands which are the property of the ſtate; yet, in all the great monarchies of Europe, there are ſtill many large tracts of land which belong to the crown. They are generally foreſt; and ſometimes foreſt where, after travelling ſeveral miles, you will ſcarce find a ſingle tree; a mere waſte and loſs of country in reſpect both of produce and population. In every great monarchy of Europe the ſale of the crown lands would produce a very large ſum of money, which, if applied to the payment of the public debts, would deliver from mortgage a much greater revenue than any which thoſe lands have ever afforded to the crown. In countries where lands, improved and cultivated very highly, and yielding at the time of ſale as great a rent as can eaſily be got from them, commonly ſell at thirty years purchaſe; the unimproved, uncultivated, and low-rented crown lands, might well be expected to ſell at forty, fifty, or ſixty years purchaſe. The crown might immediately enjoy the revenue which this great price would redeem from mortgage. In the courſe of a few years it would probably enjoy another revenue. When the crown lands had become private property, they would, in the courſe of a few years, become well-improved and well-cultivated. The increaſe of their produce would increaſe the population of the country, by augmenting the revenue and conſumption of the people. But the revenue which the crown derives from the duties of cuſtoms and exciſe, would neceſſarily increaſe

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increaſe with the revenue and conſumption of the people.

The revenue which, in any civilized monarchy, the crown derives from the crown lands, though it appears to coſt nothing to individuals, in reality coſts more to the ſociety than perhaps any other equal revenue which the crown enjoys. It would, in all caſes, be for the intereſt of the ſociety to replace this revenue to the crown by ſome other equal revenue, and to divide the lands among the people, which could not well be done better, perhaps, than by expoſing them to public ſale.

Lands, for the purpoſe of pleaſure and magnificence, parks, gardens, public walks, &c. poſſeſſions which are every where conſidered as cauſes of expence, not as ſources of revenue, ſeem to be the only lands which, in a great and civilized monarchy, ought to belong to the crown.

Public ſtock and public lands, therefore, the two ſources of revenue which may peculiarly belong to the ſovereign or commonwealth, being both improper and inſufficient funds for defraying the neceſſary expence of any great and civilized ſtate; it remains that this expence muſt, the greater part of it, be defrayed by taxes of one kind or another; the people contributing a part of their own private revenue in order to make up a public revenue to the ſovereign or commonwealth.

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PART SECOND.

Of Taxes.

THE private revenue of individuals, it has been ſhewn in the firſt book of this Inquiry, ariſes ultimately from three different ſources; Rent, Profit, and Wages. Every tax muſt finally be paid from ſome one or other of thoſe three different ſorts of revenue, or from all of them indifferently. I ſhall endeavour to give the beſt account I can, firſt, of thoſe taxes which it is intended ſhould fall upon rent; ſecondly, of thoſe which, it is intended, ſhould fall upon profit; thirdly, of thoſe which, it is intended, ſhould fall upon wages; and, fourthly, of thoſe which, it is intended, ſhould fall indifferently upon all thoſe three different ſources of private revenue. The particular conſideration of each of theſe four different ſorts of taxes will divide the ſecond part of the preſent chapter into four articles, three of which will require ſeveral other ſubdiviſions. Many of thoſe taxes, it will appear from the following review, are not finally paid from the fund, or ſource of revenue, upon which it was intended they ſhould fall.

Before I enter upon the examination of particular taxes, it is neceſſary to premiſe the four following maxims with regard to taxes in general.

I. The ſubjects of every ſtate ought to contribute towards the ſupport of the government, as nearly as poſſible, in proportion to their reſpective abilities; that is, in proportion to the

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revenue which they reſpectively enjoy under the protection of the ſtate. The expence of government to the individuals of a great nation, is like the expence of management to the joint tenants of a great eſtate, who are all obliged to contribute in proportion to their reſpective intereſts in the eſtate. In the obſervation or neglect of this maxim conſiſts, what is called the equality or inequality of taxation. Every tax, it muſt be obſerved, once for all, which falls finally upon one only of the three ſorts of revenue above mentioned, is neceſſarily unequal, in ſo far as it does not affect the other two. In the following examination of different taxes I ſhall ſeldom take much further notice of this ſort of inequality, but ſhall, in moſt caſes, confine my obſervations to that inequality which is occaſioned by a particular tax falling unequally even upon that particular ſort of private revenue which is affected by it.

II. The tax which each individual is bound to pay, ought to be certain, and not arbitrary. The time of payment, the manner of payment, the quantity to be paid, ought all to be clear and plain to the contributor, and to every other perſon. Where it is otherwiſe, every perſon ſubject to the tax is put more or leſs in the power of the tax-gatherer, who can either aggravate the tax upon any obnoxious contributor, or extort, by the terror of ſuch aggravation, ſome preſent or perquiſite to himſelf. The uncertainty of taxation encourages the inſolence and favours the corruption of an order of men who are naturally unpopular,

popular, even where they are neither insolent nor corrupt. The certainty of what each individual ought to pay is, in taxation, a matter of so great importance, that a very considerable degree of inequality, it appears, I believe, from the experience of all nations, is not near so great an evil as a very small degree of uncertainty. CHAP. II.

III. Every tax ought to be levied at the time, or in the manner, in which it is most likely to be convenient for the contributor to pay it. A tax upon the rent of land or of houses, payable at the same term at which such rents are usually paid, is levied at the time when it is most likely to be convenient for the contributor to pay; or, when he is most likely to have wherewithal to pay. Taxes upon such consumable goods as are articles of luxury, are all finally paid by the consumer, and generally in a manner that is very convenient for him. He pays them by little and little, as he has occasion to buy the goods. As he is at liberty too, either to buy, or not to buy, as he pleases, it must be his own fault if he ever suffers any considerable inconveniency from such taxes.

IV. Every tax ought to be so contrived as both to take out and to keep out of the pockets of the people as little as possible, over and above what it brings into the public treasury of the state. A tax may either take out or keep out of the pockets of the people a great deal more than it brings into the public treasury, in the four following ways. First, the levying of it may require a great number of officers, whose salaries may eat up the greater part of the produce of the

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tax, and whoſe perquiſites may impoſe another additional tax upon the people. Secondly, it may obſtruct the induſtry of the people, and diſcourage them from applying to certain branches of buſineſs which might give maintenance and employment to great multitudes. While it obliges the people to pay, it may thus diminiſh, or perhaps deſtroy, ſome of the funds which might enable them more eaſily to do ſo. Thirdly, by the forfeitures and other penalties which thoſe unfortunate individuals incur who attempt unſucceſsfully to evade the tax, it may frequently ruin them, and thereby put an end to the benefit which the community might have received from the employment of their capitals. An injudicious tax offers a great temptation to ſmuggling. But the penalties of ſmuggling muſt riſe in proportion to the temptation. The law, contrary to all the ordinary principles of juſtice, firſt creates the temptation, and then puniſhes thoſe who yield to it; and it commonly enhances the puniſhment too in proportion to the very circumſtance which ought certainly to alleviate it, the temptation to commit the crime*. Fourthly, by ſubjecting the people to the frequent viſits and the odious examination of the tax-gatherers, it may expoſe them to much unneceſſary trouble, vexation, and oppreſſion; and though vexation is not, ſtrictly ſpeaking, expence, it is certainly equivalent to the expence at which every man would be willing to redeem himſelf from it. It is in ſome one or other of theſe four different ways that taxes

* See Sketches of the Hiſtory of Man, page 474. & ſeq.

are

are frequently ſo much more burdenſome to the people than they are beneficial to the ſovereign.

The evident juſtice and utility of the foregoing maxims have recommended them more or leſs to the attention of all nations. All nations have endeavoured, to the beſt of their judgment, to render their taxes as equal as they could contrive; as certain, as convenient to the contributor, both in the time and in the mode of payment, and in proportion to the revenue which they brought to the prince, as little burdenſome to the people. The following ſhort review of ſome of the principal taxes which have taken place in different ages and countries will ſhow, that the endeavours of all nations have not in this reſpect been equally ſucceſsful.

ARTICLE I.

Taxes upon Rent. Taxes upon the Rent of Land.

A TAX upon the rent of land may either be impoſed according to a certain canon, every diſtrict being valued at a certain rent, which valuation is not afterwards to be altered; or it may be impoſed in ſuch a manner as to vary with every variation in the real rent of the land, and to riſe or fall with the improvement or declenſion of its cultivation.

A land-tax, which, like that of Great Britain, is aſſeſſed upon each diſtrict according to a certain invariable canon, though it ſhould be equal at the time of its firſt eſtabliſhment, neceſſarily becomes unequal in proceſs of time, according to the unequal degrees of improvement or neglect

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in the cultivation of the different parts of the country. In England, the valuation according to which the different counties and parifhes were aſſeſſed to the land-tax by the 4th of William and Mary, was very unequal even at its firſt eſtabliſhment. This tax, therefore, ſo far offends againſt the firſt of the four maxims above-mentioned. It is perfectly agreeable to the other three. It is perfectly certain. The time of payment for the tax, being the ſame as that for the rent, is as convenient as it can be to the contributor. Though the landlord is in all caſes the real contributor, the tax is commonly advanced by the tenant, to whom the landlord is obliged to allow it in the payment of the rent. This tax is levied by a much ſmaller number of officers than any other which affords nearly the ſame revenue. As the tax upon each diſtrict does not riſe with the riſe of the rent, the ſovereign does not ſhare in the profits of the landlord's improvements. Thoſe improvements ſometimes contribute, indeed, to the diſcharge of the other landlords of the diſtrict. But the aggravation of the tax, which this may ſometimes occaſion upon a particular eſtate, is always ſo very ſmall, that it never can diſcourage thoſe improvements, nor keep down the produce of the land below what it would otherwiſe riſe to. As it has no tendency to diminiſh the quantity, it can have none to raiſe the price of that produce. It does not obſtruct the induſtry of the people. It ſubjects the landlord to no other inconveniency beſides the unavoidable one of paying the tax.

The

The advantage, however, which the landlord has derived from the invariable conſtancy of the valuation by which all the lands of Great Britain are rated to the land-tax, has been principally owing to ſome circumſtances altogether extraneous to the nature of the tax.

It has been owing in part to the great proſperity of almoſt every part of the country, the rents of almoſt all the eſtates of Great Britain having, ſince the time when this valuation was firſt eſtabliſhed, been continually riſing, and ſcarce any of them having fallen. The landlords, therefore, have almoſt all gained the difference between the tax which they would have paid, according to the preſent rent of their eſtates, and that which they actually pay according to the ancient valuation. Had the ſtate of the country been different, had rents been gradually falling in conſequence of the declenſion of cultivation, the landlords would almoſt all have loſt this difference. In the ſtate of things which has happened to take place ſince the revolution, the conſtancy of the valuation has been advantageous to the landlord and hurtful to the ſovereign. In a different ſtate of things it might have been advantageous to the ſovereign and hurtful to the landlord.

As the tax is made payable in money, ſo the valuation of the land is expreſſed in money. Since the eſtabliſhment of this valuation the value of ſilver has been pretty uniform, and there has been no alteration in the ſtandard of the coin either as to weight or fineneſs. Had ſilver riſen conſiderably in its value, as it ſeems to have done

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in the courſe of the two centuries which preceded the diſcovery of the mines of America, the conſtancy of the valuation might have proved very oppreſſive to the landlord. Had ſilver fallen conſiderably in its value, as it certainly did for about a century at leaſt after the diſcovery of thoſe mines, the ſame conſtancy of valuation would have reduced very much this branch of the revenue of the ſovereign. Had any conſiderable alteration been made in the ſtandard of the money, either by ſinking the ſame quantity of ſilver to a lower denomination, or by raiſing it to a higher; had an ounce of ſilver, for example, inſtead of being coined into five ſhillings and two-pence, been coined, either into pieces which bore ſo low a denomination as two ſhillings and ſeven-pence, or into pieces which bore ſo high a one as ten ſhillings and four-pence, it would in the one caſe have hurt the revenue of the proprietor, in the other that of the ſovereign.

In circumſtances, therefore, ſomewhat different from thoſe which have actually taken place, this conſtancy of valuation might have been a very great inconveniency, either to the contributors, or to the commonwealth. In the courſe of ages ſuch circumſtances, however, muſt, at ſome time or other, happen. But though empires, like all the other works of men, have all hitherto proved mortal, yet every empire aims at immortality. Every conſtitution, therefore, which it is meant ſhould be as permanent as the empire itſelf, ought to be convenient, not in certain circumſtances only, but in all circumſtances;

ſtances; or ought to be ſuited, not to thoſe circumſtances which are tranſitory, occaſional, or accidental, but to thoſe which are neceſſary and therefore always the ſame. CHAP. II.

A tax upon the rent of land which varies with every variation of the rent, or which riſes and falls according to the improvement or neglect of cultivation, is recommended by that ſect of men of letters in France, who call themſelves the œconomiſts, as the moſt equitable of all taxes. All taxes, they pretend, fall ultimately upon the rent of land, and ought therefore to be impoſed equally upon the fund which muſt finally pay them. That all taxes ought to fall as equally as poſſible upon the fund which muſt finally pay them, is certainly true. But without entering into the diſagreeable diſcuſſion of the metaphyſical arguments by which they ſupport their very ingenious theory, it will ſufficiently appear, from the following review, what are the taxes which fall finally upon the rent of the land, and what are thoſe which fall finally upon ſome other fund.

In the Venetian territory all the arable lands which are given in leaſe to farmers are taxed at a tenth of the rent *. The leaſes are recorded in a public regiſter which is kept by the officers of revenue in each province or diſtrict. When the proprietor cultivates his own lands, they are valued according to an equitable eſtimation, and he is allowed a deduction of one-fifth of the tax, ſo that for ſuch lands he pays only eight inſtead of ten per cent. of the ſuppoſed rent.

* Memoires concernant les Droits, p. 240, 241.

A land-tax of this kind is certainly more equal than the land-tax of England. It might not, perhaps, be altogether ſo certain, and the aſſeſſment of the tax might frequently occaſion a good deal more trouble to the landlord. It might too be a good deal more expenſive in the levying.

Such a ſyſtem of adminiſtration, however, might perhaps be contrived as would, in a great meaſure, both prevent this uncertainty and moderate this expence.

The landlord and tenant, for example, might jointly be obliged to record their leaſe in a public regiſter. Proper penalties might be enacted againſt concealing or miſrepreſenting any of the conditions; and if part of thoſe penalties were to be paid to either of the two parties who informed againſt and convicted the other of ſuch concealment or miſrepreſentation, it would effectually deter them from combining together in order to defraud the public revenue. All the conditions of the leaſe might be ſufficiently known from ſuch a record.

Some landlords, inſtead of raiſing the rent, take a fine for the renewal of the leaſe. This practice is in moſt caſes the expedient of a ſpendthrift, who for a ſum of ready money ſells a future revenue of much greater value. It is in moſt caſes, therefore, hurtful to the landlord. It is frequently hurtful to the tenant, and it is always hurtful to the community. It frequently takes from the tenant ſo great a part of his capital, and thereby diminiſhes ſo much his ability to cultivate the land, that he finds it more

more difficult to pay a ſmall rent than it would otherwiſe have been to pay a great one. Whatever diminiſhes his ability to cultivate, neceſſarily keeps down, below what it would otherwiſe have been, the moſt important part of the revenue of the community. By rendering the tax upon ſuch fines a good deal heavier than upon the ordinary rent, this hurtful practice might be diſcouraged, to the no ſmall advantage of all the different parties concerned, of the landlord, of the tenant, of the ſovereign, and of the whole community.

Some leaſes preſcribe to the tenant a certain mode of cultivation, and a certain ſucceſſion of crops during the whole continuance of the leaſe. This condition, which is generally the effect of the landlord's conceit of his own ſuperior knowledge (a conceit in moſt caſes very ill founded), ought always to be conſidered as an additional rent; as a rent in ſervice inſtead of a rent in money. In order to diſcourage the practice, which is generally a fooliſh one, this ſpecies of rent might be valued rather high, and conſequently taxed ſomewhat higher than common money rents.

Some landlords, inſtead of a rent in money, require a rent in kind, in corn, cattle, poultry, wine, oil, &c. others again require a rent in ſervice. Such rents are always more hurtful to the tenant than beneficial to the landlord. They either take more or keep more out of the pocket of the former, than they put into that of the latter. In every country where they take place, the

the tenants are poor and beggarly, pretty much according to the degree in which they take place. By valuing, in the ſame manner, ſuch rents rather high, and conſequently taxing them ſomewhat higher than common money rents, a practice which is hurtful to the whole community might perhaps be ſufficiently diſcouraged.

When the landlord choſe to occupy himſelf a part of his own lands, the rent might be valued according to an equitable arbitration of the farmers and landlords in the neighbourhood, and a moderate abatement of the tax might be granted to him, in the ſame manner as in the Venetian territory; provided the rent of the lands which he occupied did not exceed a certain ſum. It is of importance that the landlord ſhould be encouraged to cultivate a part of his own land. His capital is generally greater than that of the tenant, and with leſs ſkill he can frequently raiſe a greater produce. The landlord can afford to try experiments, and is generally diſpoſed to do ſo. His unſucceſsful experiments occaſion only a moderate loſs to himſelf. His ſucceſsful ones contribute to the improvement and better cultivation of the whole country. It might be of importance, however, that the abatement of the tax ſhould encourage him to cultivate to a certain extent only. If the landlords ſhould, the greater part of them, be tempted to farm the whole of their own lands, the country, (inſtead of ſober and induſtrious tenants, who are bound by their own intereſt to cultivate as well as their capital and ſkill will allow

allow them) would be filled with idle and profligate bailiffs, whose abusive management would soon degrade the cultivation, and reduce the annual produce of the land, to the diminution, not only of the revenue of their masters, but of the most important part of that of the whole society.

Such a system of administration might, perhaps, free a tax of this kind from any degree of uncertainty which could occasion either oppression or inconveniency to the contributor; and might at the same time serve to introduce into the common management of land such a plan or policy, as might contribute a good deal to the general improvement and good cultivation of the country.

The expence of levying a land-tax, which varied with every variation of the rent, would no doubt be somewhat greater than that of levying one which was always rated according to a fixed valuation. Some additional expence would necessarily be incurred both by the different register offices which it would be proper to establish in the different districts of the country, and by the different valuations which might occasionally be made of the lands which the proprietor chose to occupy himself. The expence of all this, however, might be very moderate, and much below what is incurred in the levying of many other taxes, which afford a very inconsiderable revenue in comparison of what might easily be drawn from a tax of this kind.

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The discouragement which a variable land-tax of this kind might give to the improvement of land, seems to be the most important objection which can be made to it. The landlord would certainly be less disposed to improve, when the sovereign, who contributed nothing to the expence, was to share in the profit of the improvement. Even this objection might perhaps be obviated by allowing the landlord, before he began his improvement, to ascertain, in conjunction with the officers of revenue, the actual value of his lands, according to the equitable arbitration of a certain number of landlords and farmers in the neighbourhood, equally chosen by both parties; and by rating him according to this valuation for such a number of years, as might be fully sufficient for his complete indemnification. To draw the attention of the sovereign towards the improvement of the land, from a regard to the increase of his own revenue, is one of the principal advantages proposed by this species of land-tax. The term, therefore, allowed for the indemnification of the landlord, ought not to be a great deal longer than what was necessary for that purpose; lest the remoteness of the interest should discourage too much this attention. It had better, however, be somewhat too long than in any respect too short. No incitement to the attention of the sovereign can ever counterbalance the smallest discouragement to that of the landlord. The attention of the sovereign can be at best but a very general and vague consideration of what is likely to contribute

bute to the better cultivation of the greater part of his dominions. The attention of the landlord is a particular and minute conſideration of what is likely to be the moſt advantageous application of every inch of ground upon his eſtate. The principal attention of the ſovereign ought to be to encourage, by every means in his power, the attention both of the landlord and of the farmer; by allowing both to purſue their own intereſt in their own way, and according to their own judgment; by giving to both the moſt perfect ſecurity that they ſhall enjoy the full recompence of their own induſtry; and by procuring to both the moſt extenſive market for every part of their produce, in conſequence of eſtabliſhing the eaſieſt and ſafeſt communications both by land and by water, through every part of his own dominions, as well as the moſt unbounded freedom of exportation to the dominions of all other princes. CHAP. II.

If by ſuch a ſyſtem of adminiſtration a tax of this kind could be ſo managed as to give, not only no diſcouragement, but, on the contrary, ſome encouragement to the improvement of land, it does not appear likely to occaſion any other inconveniency to the landlord, except always the unavoidable one of being obliged to pay the tax.

In all the variations of the ſtate of the ſociety, in the improvement and in the declenſion of agriculture; in all the variations in the value of ſilver, and in all thoſe in the ſtandard of the coin, a tax of this kind would, of its own accord and without any attention of government, readily ſuit

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ſuit itſelf to the actual ſituation of things, and would be equally juſt and equitable in all thoſe different changes. It would, therefore, be much more proper to be eſtabliſhed as a perpetual and unalterable regulation, or as what is called a fundamental law of the commonwealth, than any tax which was always to be levied according to a certain valuation.

Some ſtates, inſtead of the ſimple and obvious expedient of a regiſter of leaſes, have had recourſe to the laborious and expenſive one of an actual ſurvey and valuation of all the lands in the country. They have ſuſpected, probably, that the leſſor and leſſee, in order to defraud the public revenue, might combine to conceal the real terms of the leaſe. Doomſday-book ſeems to have been the reſult of a very accurate ſurvey of this kind.

In the ancient dominions of the King of Pruſſia, the land tax is aſſeſſed according to an actual ſurvey and valuation, which is reviewed and altered from time to time*. According to that valuation, the lay proprietors pay from twenty to twenty-five per cent. of their revenue. Eccleſiaſtics from forty to forty-five per cent. The ſurvey and valuation of Sileſia was made by order of the preſent King; it is ſaid with great accuracy. According to that valuation, the lands belonging to the Biſhop of Breſlaw are taxed at twenty-five per cent. of their rent. The

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tome i. p. 114, 115, 116, &c.

other revenues of the eccleſiaſtics of both religions, at fifty per cent. The commanderies of the Teutonic order, and of that of Malta, at forty per cent. Lands held by a noble tenure, at thirty-eight and one third per cent. Lands held by a baſe tenure, at thirty five and one-third per cent.

The ſurvey and valuation of Bohemia is ſaid to have been the work of more than a hundred years. It was not perfected till after the peace of 1748, by the orders of the preſent Empreſs Queen *. The ſurvey of the dutchy of Milan, which was begun in the time of Charles VI., was not perfected till after 1760. It is eſteemed one of the moſt accurate that has ever been made. The ſurvey of Savoy and Piedmont was executed under the orders of the late King of Sardinia †.

In the dominions of the King of Pruſſia the revenue of the church is taxed much higher than that of lay proprietors. The revenue of the church is, the greater part of it, a burden upon the rent of land. It ſeldom happens that any part of it is applied towards the improvement of land; or is ſo employed as to contribute in any reſpect towards increaſing the revenue of the great body of the people. His Pruſſian Majeſty had probably, upon that account, thought it reaſonable, that it ſhould contribute a good deal more towards relieving the exigencies

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tome i. p. 83, 84.

† Id. p. 280, &c. alſo p. 287, &c. to 316.

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of the ſtate. In ſome countries the lands of the church are exempted from all taxes. In others they are taxed more lightly than other lands. In the dutchy of Milan, the lands which the church poſſeſſed before 1575, are rated to the tax at a third only of their value.

In Sileſia, lands held by a noble tenure are taxed three per cent. higher than thoſe held by a baſe tenure. The honours and privileges of different kinds annexed to the former, His Pruſſian Majeſty had probably imagined, would ſufficiently compenſate to the proprietor a ſmall aggravation of the tax; while at the ſame time the humiliating inferiority of the latter would be in ſome meaſure alleviated by being taxed ſomewhat more lightly. In other countries, the ſyſtem of taxation, inſtead of alleviating, aggravates this inequality. In the dominions of the King of Sardinia, and in thoſe provinces of France which are ſubject to what is called the real or predial taille, the tax falls altogether upon the lands held by a baſe tenure. Thoſe held by a noble one are exempted.

A land-tax aſſeſſed according to a general ſurvey and valuation, how equal ſoever it may be at firſt, muſt, in the courſe of a very moderate period of time, become unequal. To prevent its becoming ſo would require the continual and painful attention of government to all the variations in the ſtate and produce of every different farm in the country. The governments of Pruſſia, of Bohemia, of Sardinia, and of the dutchy of Milan, actually exert an attention of

this kind; an attention ſo unſuitable to the nature of government, that it is not likely to be of long continuance, and which, if it is continued, will probably in the long-run occaſion much more trouble and vexation than it can poſſibly bring relief to the contributors. CHAP. II.

In 1666, the generality of Montauban was aſſeſſed to the Real or predial tallie according, it is ſaid, to a very exact ſurvey and valuation*. By 1727, this aſſeſſment had become altogether unequal. In order to remedy this inconveniency, government has found no better expedient than to impoſe upon the whole generality an additional tax of a hundred and twenty thouſand livres. This additional tax is rated upon all the different diſtricts ſubject to the tallie according to the old aſſeſſment. But it is levied only upon thoſe which in the actual ſtate of things are by that aſſeſſment under-taxed, and it is applied to the relief of thoſe which by the ſame aſſeſſment are over-taxed. Two diſtricts, for example, one of which ought in the actual ſtate of things to be taxed at nine hundred, the other at eleven hundred livres, are by the old aſſeſſment both taxed at a thouſand livres. Both theſe diſtricts are by the additional tax rated at eleven hundred livres each. But this additional tax is levied only upon the diſtrict undercharged, and it is applied altogether to the relief of that over-charged, which conſequently pays only nine hundred livres. The government neither gains nor loſes by the additional tax, which

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tome ii. p. 139, &c.

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Taxes which are proportioned, not to the Rent, but to the Produce of Land.

TAXES upon the produce of land are in reality taxes upon the rent; and though they may be originally advanced by the farmer, are finally paid by the landlord. When a certain portion of the produce is to be paid away for a tax, the farmer computes, as well as he can, what the value of this portion is, one year with another, likely to amount to, and he makes a proportionable abatement in the rent which he agrees to pay to the landlord. There is no farmer who does not compute beforehand what the church tythe, which is a land tax of this kind, is, one year with another, likely to amount to.

The tythe, and every other land-tax of this kind, under the appearance of perfect equality, are very unequal taxes; a certain portion of the produce being, in different situations, equivalent to a very different portion of the rent. In some very rich lands the produce is so great, that the one half of it is fully sufficient to replace to the farmer his capital employed in cultivation, together with the ordinary profits of farming stock in the neighbourhood. The other half, or, what comes to the same thing, the value of the other half, he could afford to pay as rent to the landlord,

lord, if there was no tythe. But if a tenth of the produce is taken from him in the way of tythe, he must require an abatement of the fifth part of his rent, otherwise he cannot get back his capital with the ordinary profit. In this case the rent of the landlord, instead of amounting to a half, or five-tenths of the whole produce, will amount only to four-tenths of it. In poorer lands, on the contrary, the produce is sometimes so small, and the expence of cultivation so great, that it requires four-fifths of the whole produce to replace to the farmer his capital with the ordinary profit. In this case, though there was no tythe, the rent of the landlord could amount to no more than one-fifth or two-tenths of the whole produce. But if the farmer pays one-tenth of the produce in the way of tythe, he must require an equal abatement of the rent of the landlord, which will thus be reduced to one-tenth only of the whole produce. Upon the rent of rich lands, the tythe may sometimes be a tax of no more than one-fifth part, or four shillings in the pound; whereas upon that of poorer lands, it may sometimes be a tax of one half, or of ten shillings in the pound. CHAP. II.

The tythe, as it is frequently a very unequal tax upon the rent, so it is always a great discouragement both to the improvements of the landlord and to the cultivation of the farmer. The one cannot venture to make the most important, which are generally the most expensive improvements; nor the other to raise the most valuable, which are generally too the most expensive crops;

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when the church, which lays out no part of the expence, is to ſhare ſo very largely in the profit. The cultivation of madder was for a long time confined by the tythe to the United Provinces, which, being preſbyterian countries, and upon that account exempted from this deſtructive tax, enjoyed a ſort of monopoly of that uſeful dying drug againſt the reſt of Europe. The late attempts to introduce the culture of this plant into England, have been made only in conſequence of the ſtatute which enacted that five ſhillings an acre ſhould be received in lieu of all manner of tythe upon madder.

As through the greater part of Europe, the church, ſo in many different countries of Aſia, the ſtate, is principally ſupported by a land-tax, proportioned, not to the rent, but to the produce of the land. In China, the principal revenue of the ſovereign conſiſts in a tenth part of the produce of all the lands of the empire. This tenth part, however, is eſtimated ſo very moderately, that, in many provinces, it is ſaid not to exceed a thirtieth part of the ordinary produce. The land-tax or land-rent which uſed to be paid to the Mahometan government of Bengal, before that country fell into the hands of the Engliſh Eaſt India Company, is ſaid to have amounted to about a fifth part of the produce. The land-tax of ancient Egypt is ſaid likewiſe to have amounted to a fifth part.

In Aſia, this ſort of land-tax is ſaid to intereſt the ſovereign in the improvement and cultivation of land. The ſovereigns of China, thoſe of

of Bengal while under the Mahometan government, and thoſe of ancient Egypt, are ſaid accordingly to have been extremely attentive to the making and maintaining of good roads and navigable canals, in order to increaſe, as much as poſſible, both the quantity and value of every part of the produce of the land, by procuring to every part of it the moſt extenſive market which their own dominions could afford. The tythe of the church is divided into ſuch ſmall portions, that no one of its proprietors can have any intereſt of this kind. The parſon of a pariſh could never find his account in making a road or canal to a diſtant part of the country, in order to extend the market for the produce of his own particular pariſh. Such taxes, when deſtined for the maintenance of the ſtate, have ſome advantages which may ſerve in ſome meaſure to balance their inconveniency. When deſtined for the maintenance of the church, they are attended with nothing but inconveniency.

Taxes upon the produce of land may be levied, either in kind; or, according to a certain valuation, in money.

The parſon of a pariſh, or a gentleman of ſmall fortune who lives upon his eſtate, may ſometimes, perhaps, find ſome advantage in receiving, the one his tythe, and the other his rent, in kind. The quantity to be collected, and the diſtrict within which it is to be collected, are ſo ſmall, that they both can overſee, with their own eyes, the collection and diſpoſal of every part of what is due to them. A gentleman of great for-

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tune, who lived in the capital, would be in danger of ſuffering much by the neglect, and more by the fraud of his factors and agents, if the rents of an eſtate in a diſtant province were to be paid to him in this manner. The loſs of the ſovereign, from the abuſe and depredation of his tax-gatherers, would neceſſarily be much greater. The ſervants of the moſt careleſs private perſon are, perhaps, more under the eye of their maſter than thoſe of the moſt careful prince; and a public revenue, which was paid in kind, would ſuffer ſo much from the miſmanagement of the collectors, that a very ſmall part of what was levied upon the people would ever arrive at the treaſury of the prince. Some part of the public revenue of China, however, is ſaid to be paid in this manner. The Mandarins and other tax-gatherers will, no doubt, find their advantage in continuing the practice of a payment which is ſo much more liable to abuſe than any payment in money.

A tax upon the produce of land which is levied in money, may be levied either according to a valuation which varies with all the variations of the market price; or according to a fixed valuation, a buſhel of wheat, for example, being always valued at one and the ſame money price, whatever may be the ſtate of the market. The produce of a tax levied in the former way, will vary only according to the variations in the real produce of the land according to the improvement or neglect of cultivation. The produce of a tax levied in the latter way will vary, not

not only according to the variations in the produce of the land, but according to both thoſe in the value of the precious metals, and thoſe in the quantity of thoſe metals which is at different times contained in coin of the ſame denomination. The produce of the former will always bear the ſame proportion to the value of the real produce of the land. The produce of the latter may, at different times, bear very different proportions to that value.

When, inſtead either of a certain portion of the produce of land, or of the price of a certain portion, a certain ſum of money is to be paid in full compenſation for all tax or tythe; the tax becomes, in this caſe, exactly of the ſame nature with the land-tax of England. It neither riſes nor falls with the rent of the land. It neither encourages nor diſcourages improvement. The tythe in the greater part of thoſe pariſhes which pay what is called a modus in lieu of all other tythe, is a tax of this kind. During the Mahometan government of Bengal, inſtead of the payment in kind of the fifth part of the produce, a modus, and, it is ſaid, a very moderate one, was eſtabliſhed in the greater part of the diſtricts or zemindaries of the country. Some of the ſervants of the Eaſt India Company, under pretence of reſtoring the public revenue to its proper value, have, in ſome provinces, exchanged this modus for a payment in kind. Under their management this change is likely both to diſcourage cultivation, and to give new opportunities for abuſe in the collection of the public

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revenue, which has fallen very much below what it was said to have been, when it first fell under the management of the company. The servants of the company may, perhaps, have profited by this change, but at the expence, it is probable, both of their masters and of the country.

Taxes upon the Rents of Houses.

THE rent of a house may be distinguished into two parts, of which the one may very properly be called the Building rent; the other is commonly called the Ground rent.

The building rent is the interest or profit of the capital expended in building the house. In order to put the trade of a builder upon a level with other trades, it is necessary that this rent should be sufficient, first, to pay him the same interest which he would have got for his capital if he had lent it upon good security; and, secondly, to keep the house in constant repair, or, what comes to the same thing, to replace, within a certain term of years, the capital which had been employed in building it. The building rent, or the ordinary profit of building, is, therefore, every where regulated by the ordinary interest of money. Where the market rate of interest is four per cent. the rent of a house which, over and above paying the ground rent, affords six, or six and a half per cent. upon the whole expence of building, may perhaps afford a sufficient profit to the builder. Where the market rate of interest is five per cent., it may perhaps require seven or seven and a half per cent. If,

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in proportion to the intereſt of money, the trade of the builder affords at any time a much greater profit than this, it will ſoon draw ſo much capital from other trades as will reduce the profit to its proper level. If it affords at any time much leſs than this, other trades will ſoon draw ſo much capital from it as will again raiſe that profit.

Whatever part of the whole rent of a houſe is over and above what is ſufficient for affording this reaſonable profit, naturally goes to the ground-rent; and where the owner of the ground and the owner of the building are two different perſons, is, in moſt caſes, completely paid to the former. This ſurplus rent is the price which the inhabitant of the houſe pays for ſome real or ſuppoſed advantage of the ſituation. In country houſes, at a diſtance from any great town, where there is plenty of ground to chuſe upon, the ground rent is ſcarce any thing, or no more than what the ground which the houſe ſtands upon would pay if employed in agriculture. In country villas in the neighbourhood of ſome great town, it is ſometimes a good deal higher; and the peculiar conveniency or beauty of ſituation is there frequently very well paid for. Ground rents are generally higheſt in the capital, and in thoſe particular parts of it where there happens to be the greateſt demand for houſes, whatever be the reaſon of that demand, whether for trade and buſineſs, for pleaſure and ſociety, or for mere vanity and faſhion.

A tax upon houſe-rent, payable by the tenant and proportioned to the whole rent of each houſe, could

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could not, for any conſiderable time at leaſt, affect the building rent. If the builder did not get his reaſonable profit, he would be obliged to quit the trade; which, by raiſing the demand for building, would in a ſhort time bring back his profit to its proper level with that of other trades. Neither would ſuch a tax fall altogether upon the ground-rent; but it would divide itſelf in ſuch a manner as to fall, partly upon the inhabitant of the houſe, and partly upon the owner of the ground.

Let us ſuppoſe, for example, that a particular perſon judges that he can afford for houſe-rent an expence of ſixty pounds a year; and let us ſuppoſe too that a tax of four ſhillings in the pound, or of one-fifth, payable by the inhabitant, is laid upon houſe-rent. A houſe of ſixty pounds rent will in this caſe coſt him ſeventy-two pounds a year, which is twelve pounds more than he thinks he can afford. He will, therefore, content himſelf with a worſe houſe, or a houſe of fifty pounds rent, which, with the additional ten pounds that he muſt pay for the tax, will make up the ſum of ſixty pounds a year, the expence which he judges he can afford; and in order to pay the tax he will give up a part of the additional conveniency which he might have had from a houſe of ten pounds a year more rent. He will give up, I ſay, a part of this additional conveniency; for he will ſeldom be obliged to give up the whole, but will, in conſequence of the tax, get a better houſe for fifty pounds a year, than he could have got if there had been

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no tax. For as a tax of this kind, by taking away this particular competitor, muſt diminiſh the competition for houſes of ſixty pounds rent, ſo it muſt likewiſe diminiſh it for thoſe of fifty pounds rent, and in the ſame manner for thoſe of all other rents, except the loweſt rent, for which it would for ſome time increaſe the competition. But the rents of every claſs of houſes for which the competition was diminiſhed, would neceſſarily be more or leſs reduced. As no part of this reduction, however, could, for any conſiderable time at leaſt, affect the building rent; the whole of it muſt in the long-run neceſſarily fall upon the ground-rent. The final payment of this tax, therefore, would fall, partly upon the inhabitant of the houſe, who, in order to pay his ſhare, would be obliged to give up a part of his conveniency; and partly upon the owner of the ground, who, in order to pay his ſhare, would be obliged to give up a part of his revenue. In what proportion this final payment would be divided between them, it is not perhaps very eaſy to aſcertain. The diviſion would probably be very different in different cicumſtances, and a tax of this kind might, according to thoſe different circumſtances, affect very unequally both the inhabitant of the houſe and the owner of the ground.

The inequality with which a tax of this kind might fall upon the owners of different ground-rents, would ariſe altogether from the accidental inequality of this diviſion. But the inequality with which it might fall upon the inhabitants of different houſes would ariſe, not only from this, but

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but from another cauſe. The proportion of the expence of houſe-rent to the whole expence of living, is different in the different degrees of fortune. It is perhaps higheſt in the higheſt degree, and it diminiſhes gradually through the inferior degrees, ſo as in general to be loweſt in the loweſt degree. The neceſſaries of life occaſion the great expence of the poor. They find it difficult to get food, and the greater part of their little revenue is ſpent in getting it. The luxuries and vanities of life occaſion the principal expence of the rich; and a magnificent houſe embelliſhes and ſets off to the beſt advantage all the other luxuries and vanities which they poſſeſs. A tax upon houſe-rents, therefore, would in general fall heavieſt upon the rich; and in this ſort of inequality there would not, perhaps, be any thing very unreaſonable. It is not very unreaſonable that the rich ſhould contribute to the public expence, not only in proportion to their revenue, but ſomething more than in that proportion.

The rent of houſes, though it in ſome reſpects reſembles the rent of land, is in one reſpect eſſentially different from it. The rent of land is paid for the uſe of a productive ſubject. The land which pays it produces it. The rent of houſes is paid for the uſe of an unproductive ſubject. Neither the houſe nor the ground which it ſtands upon produce any thing. The perſon who pays the rent, therefore, muſt draw it from ſome other ſource of revenue, diſtinct from and independent of this ſubject. A tax upon the

rent

rent of houſes, ſo far as it falls upon the inhabitants, muſt be drawn from the ſame ſource as the rent itſelf, and muſt be paid from their revenue, whether derived from the wages of labour, the profits of ſtock, or the rent of land. So far as it falls upon the inhabitants, it is one of thoſe taxes which fall, not upon one only, but indifferently upon all the three different ſources of revenue; and is in every reſpect of the ſame nature as a tax upon any other ſort of conſumable commodities. In general there is not, perhaps, any one article of expence or conſumption by which the liberality or narrowneſs of a man's whole expence can be better judged of, than by his houſe-rent. A proportional tax upon this particular article of expence might, perhaps, produce a more conſiderable revenue than any which has hitherto been drawn from it in any part of Europe. If the tax indeed was very high, the greater part of people would endeavour to evade it, as much as they could, by contenting themſelves with ſmaller houſes, and by turning the greater part of their expence into ſome other channel.

The rent of houſes might eaſily be aſcertained with ſufficient accuracy, by a policy of the ſame kind with that which would be neceſſary for aſcertaining the ordinary rent of land. Houſes not inhabited ought to pay no tax. A tax upon them would fall altogether upon the proprietor, who would thus be taxed for a ſubject which afforded him neither conveniency nor revenue. Houſes inhabited by the proprietor ought to be

rated, not according to the expence which they might have coſt in building, but according to the rent which an equitable arbitration might judge them likely to bring, if leaſed to a tenant. If rated according to the expence which they may have coſt in building, a tax of three or four ſhillings in the pound, joined with other taxes, would ruin almoſt all the rich and great families of this, and, I believe, of every other civilized country. Whoever will examine, with attention, the different town and country houſes of ſome of the richeſt and greateſt families in this country, will find that, at the rate of only ſix and a half, or ſeven per cent. upon the original expence of building, their houſe-rent is nearly equal to the whole neat rent of their eſtates. It is the accumulated expence of ſeveral ſucceſſive generations, laid out upon objects of great beauty and magnificence, indeed; but, in proportion to what they coſt, of very ſmall exchangeable value*.

Ground-rents are a ſtill more proper ſubject of taxation than the rent of houſes. A tax upon ground-rents would not raiſe the rents of houſes. It would fall altogether upon the owner of the ground-rent, who acts always as a monopoliſt, and exacts the greateſt rent which can be got for the uſe of his ground. More or leſs can be got for it according as the competitors happen to be richer or poorer, or can afford to gratify their

* Since the firſt publication of this book, a tax nearly upon the above-mentioned principles has been impoſed.

fancy for a particular ſpot of ground at a greater or ſmaller expence. In every country the greateſt number of rich competitors is in the capital, and it is there accordingly that the higheſt ground-rents are always to be found. As the wealth of thoſe competitors would in no reſpect be increaſed by a tax upon ground-rents, they would not probably be diſpoſed to pay more for the uſe of the ground. Whether the tax was to be advanced by the inhabitant, or by the owner of the ground, would be of little importance. The more the inhabitant was obliged to pay for the tax, the leſs he would incline to pay for the ground; ſo that the final payment of the tax would fall altogether upon the owner of the ground-rent. The ground-rents of uninhabited houſes ought to pay no tax.

Both ground-rents and the ordinary rent of land are a ſpecies of revenue which the owner, in many caſes, enjoys without any care or attention of his own. Though a part of this revenue ſhould be taken from him in order to defray the expences of the ſtate, no diſcouragement will thereby be given to any ſort of induſtry. The annual produce of the land and labour of the ſociety, the real wealth and revenue of the great body of the people, might be the ſame after ſuch a tax as before. Ground-rents, and the ordinary rent of land, are, therefore, perhaps, the ſpecies of revenue which can beſt bear to have a peculiar tax impoſed upon them.

Ground-rents ſeem, in this reſpect, a more proper ſubject of peculiar taxation than even the ordinary

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ordinary rent of land. The ordinary rent of land is, in many cafes, owing partly at leaft to the attention and good management of the landlord. A very heavy tax might difcourage too much this attention and good management. Ground-rents, fo far as they exceed the ordinary rent of land, are altogether owing to the good government of the fovereign, which, by protecting the induftry either of the whole people, or of the inhabitants of fome particular place, enables them to pay fo much more than its real value for the ground which they build their houfes upon; or to make to its owner fo much more than compenfation for the lofs which he might fuftain by this ufe of it. Nothing can be more reafonable than that a fund which owes its exiftence to the good government of the ftate, fhould be taxed peculiarly, or fhould contribute fomething more than the greater part of other funds, towards the fupport of that government.

Though, in many different countries of Europe, taxes have been impofed upon the rent of houfes, I do not know of any in which ground-rents have been confidered as a feparate fubject of taxation. The contrivers of taxes have, probably, found fome difficulty in afcertaining what part of the rent ought to be confidered as ground-rent, and what part ought to be confidered as building-rent. It fhould not, however, feem very difficult to diftinguifh thofe two parts of the rent from one another.

In Great Britain the rent of houfes is fuppofed to be taxed in the fame proportion as the rent of

of land, by what is called the annual land-tax. The valuation, according to which each different parish and district is assessed to this tax, is always the same. It was originally extremely unequal, and it still continues to be so. Through the greater part of the kingdom this tax falls still more lightly upon the rent of houses than upon that of land. In some few districts only, which were originally rated high, and in which the rents of houses have fallen considerably, the land-tax of three or four shillings in the pound, is said to amount to an equal proportion of the real rent of houses. Untenanted houses, though by law subject to the tax, are, in most districts, exempted from it by the favour of the assessors; and this exemption sometimes occasions some little variation in the rate of particular houses, though that of the district is always the same. Improvements of rent, by new buildings, repairs, &c. go to the discharge of the district, which occasions still further variations in the rate of particular houses.

In the province of Holland* every house is taxed at two and a half per cent. of its value, without any regard either to the rent which it actually pays, or to the circumstance of its being tenanted or untenanted. There seems to be a hardship in obliging the proprietor to pay a tax for an untenanted house, from which he can derive no revenue, especially so very heavy a tax. In Holland, where the market rate of interest

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. p. 223.

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does not exceed three per cent. two and a half per cent. upon the whole value of the houſe, muſt, in moſt caſes, amount to more than a third of the building-rent, perhaps of the whole rent. The valuation, indeed, according to which the houſes are rated, though very unequal, is ſaid to be always below the real value. When a houſe is rebuilt, improved or enlarged, there is a new valuation, and the tax is rated accordingly.

The contrivers of the ſeveral taxes which in England have, at different times, been impoſed upon houſes, ſeem to have imagined that there was ſome great difficulty in aſcertaining, with tolerable exactneſs, what was the real rent of every houſe. They have regulated their taxes, therefore, according to ſome more obvious circumſtance, ſuch as they had probably imagined would, in moſt caſes, bear ſome proportion to the rent.

The firſt tax of this kind was hearth-money; or a tax of two ſhillings upon every hearth. In order to aſcertain how many hearths were in the houſe, it was neceſſary that the tax-gatherer ſhould enter every room in it. This odious viſit rendered the tax odious. Soon after the revolution, therefore, it was aboliſhed as a badge of ſlavery.

The next tax of this kind was, a tax of two ſhillings upon every dwelling houſe inhabited. A houſe with ten windows to pay four ſhillings more. A houſe with twenty windows and upwards to pay eight ſhillings. This tax was afterwards

afterwards ſo far altered, that houſes with twenty windows, and with leſs than thirty were ordered to pay ten ſhillings, and thoſe with thirty windows and upwards to pay twenty ſhillings. The number of windows can, in moſt caſes, be counted from the outſide, and, in all caſes, without entering every room in the houſe. The viſit of the tax-gatherer, therefore, was leſs offenſive in this tax than in the hearth-money.

This tax was afterwards repealed, and in the room of it was eſtabliſhed the window-tax, which has undergone too ſeveral alterations and augmentations. The window-tax, as it ſtands at preſent (January, 1775), over and above the duty of three ſhillings upon every houſe in England, and of one ſhilling upon every houſe in Scotland, lays a duty upon every window, which, in England, augments gradually from twopence, the loweſt rate, upon houſes with not more than ſeven windows; to two ſhillings, the higheſt rate, upon houſes with twenty-five windows and upwards.

The principal objection to all ſuch taxes is their inequality, an inequality of the worſt kind, as they muſt frequently fall much heavier upon the poor than upon the rich. A houſe of ten pounds rent in a country town may ſometimes have more windows than a houſe of five hundred pounds rent in London; and though the inhabitant of the former is likely to be a much poorer man than that of the latter, yet ſo far as his contribution is regulated by the window-tax, he muſt contribute more to the ſupport

BOOK V. of the ſtate. Such taxes are, therefore, directly contrary to the firſt of the four maxims above mentioned. They do not ſeem to offend much againſt any of the other three.

The natural tendency of the window-tax, and of all other taxes upon houſes, is to lower rents. The more a man pays for the tax, the leſs, it is evident, he can afford to pay for the rent. Since the impoſition of the window-tax, however, the rents of houſes have upon the whole riſen, more or leſs, in almoſt every town and village of Great Britain, with which I am acquainted. Such has been almoſt every where the increaſe of the demand for houſes, that it has raiſed the rents more than the window-tax could ſink them; one of the many proofs of the great proſperity of the country, and of the increaſing revenue of its inhabitants. Had it not been for the tax, rents would probably have riſen ſtill higher.

ARTICLE II.

Taxes upon Profit, or upon the Revenue ariſing from Stock.

THE revenue or profit ariſing from ſtock naturally divides itſelf into two parts; that which pays the intereſt, and which belongs to the owner of the ſtock; and that ſurplus part which is over and above what is neceſſary for paying the intereſt.

This latter part of profit is evidently a ſubject not taxable directly. It is the compenſation,

ſation, and in moſt caſes it is no more than a very moderate compenſation, for the riſk and trouble of employing the ſtock. The employer muſt have this compenſation, otherwiſe he cannot, conſiſtently with his own intereſt, continue the employment. If he was taxed directly, therefore, in proportion to the whole profit, he would be obliged either to raiſe the rate of his profit, or to charge the tax upon the intereſt of money; that is, to pay leſs intereſt. If he raiſed the rate of his profit in proportion to the tax, the whole tax, though it might be advanced by him, would be finally paid by one or other of two different ſets of people, according to the different ways in which he might employ the ſtock of which he had the management. If he employed it as a farming ſtock in the cultivation of land, he could raiſe the rate of his profit only by retaining a greater portion, or, what comes to the ſame thing, the price of a greater portion of the produce of the land; and as this could be done only by a reduction of rent, the final payment of the tax would fall upon the landlord. If he employed it as a mercantile or manufacturing ſtock, he could raiſe the rate of his profit only by raiſing the price of his goods; in which caſe the final payment of the tax would fall altogether upon the conſumers of thoſe goods. If he did not raiſe the rate of his profit, he would be obliged to charge the whole tax upon that part of it which was allotted for the intereſt of money. He could afford leſs intereſt for whatever ſtock he borrowed, and the whole

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weight of the tax would in this caſe fall ultimately upon the intereſt of money. So far as he could not relieve himſelf from the tax in the one way, he would be obliged to relieve himſelf in the other.

The intereſt of money ſeems at firſt ſight a ſubject equally capable of being taxed directly as the rent of land. Like the rent of land, it is a neat produce which remains after completely compenſating the whole riſk and trouble of employing the ſtock. As a tax upon the rent of land cannot raiſe rents; becauſe the neat produce which remains after replacing the ſtock of the farmer, together with his reaſonable profit, cannot be greater after the tax than before it: ſo, for the ſame reaſon, a tax upon the intereſt of money could not raiſe the rate of intereſt; the quantity of ſtock or money in the country, like the quantity of land, being ſuppoſed to remain the ſame after the tax as before it. The ordinary rate of profit, it has been ſhewn in the firſt book, is every where regulated by the quantity of ſtock to be employed in proportion to the quantity of the employment, or of the buſineſs which muſt be done by it. But the quantity of the employment, or of the buſineſs to be done by ſtock, could neither be increaſed nor diminiſhed by any tax upon the intereſt of money. If the quantity of the ſtock to be employed, therefore, was neither increaſed nor diminiſhed by it, the ordinary rate of profit would neceſſarily remain the ſame. But the portion of this profit neceſſary for compenſating the riſk

riſk and trouble of the employer, would likewiſe remain the ſame; that riſk and trouble being in no reſpect altered. The reſidue, therefore, that portion which belongs to the owner of the ſtock, and which pays the intereſt of money, would neceſſarily remain the ſame too. At firſt ſight, therefore, the intereſt of money ſeems to be a ſubject as fit to be taxed directly as the rent of land.

There are, however, two different circumſtances which render the intereſt of money a much leſs proper ſubject of direct taxation than the rent of land.

Firſt, the quantity and value of the land which any man poſſeſſes can never be a ſecret, and can always be aſcertained with great exactneſs. But the whole amount of the capital ſtock which he poſſeſſes is almoſt always a ſecret, and can ſcarce ever be aſcertained with tolerable exactneſs. It is liable, beſides, to almoſt continual variations. A year ſeldom paſſes away, frequently not a month, ſometimes ſcarce a ſingle day, in which it does not riſe or fall more or leſs. An inquiſition into every man's private circumſtances, and an inquiſition which, in order to accommodate the tax to them, watched over all the fluctuations of his fortune, would be a ſource of ſuch continual and endleſs vexation as no people could ſupport.

Secondly, land is a ſubject which cannot be removed, whereas ſtock eaſily may. The proprietor of land is neceſſarily a citizen of the particular country in which his eſtate lies. The

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proprietor of ſtock is properly a citizen of the world, and is not neceſſarily attached to any particular country. He would be apt to abandon the country in which he was expoſed to a vexatious inquiſition, in order to be aſſeſſed to a burdenſome tax, and would remove his ſtock to ſome other country where he could either carry on his buſineſs, or enjoy his fortune more at his eaſe. By removing his ſtock he would put an end to all the induſtry which it had maintained in the country which he left. Stock cultivates land; ſtock employs labour. A tax which tended to drive away ſtock from any particular country, would ſo far tend to dry up every ſource of revenue, both to the ſovereign and to the ſociety. Not only the profits of ſtock, but the rent of land and the wages of labour, would neceſſarily be more or leſs diminiſhed by its removal.

The nations, accordingly, who have attempted to tax the revenue ariſing from ſtock, inſtead of any ſevere inquiſition of this kind, have been obliged to content themſelves with ſome very looſe, and, therefore, more or leſs arbitrary eſtimation. The extreme inequality and uncertainty of a tax aſſeſſed in this manner, can be compenſated only by its extreme moderation, in conſequence of which every man finds himſelf rated ſo very much below his real revenue, that he gives himſelf little diſturbance though his neighbour ſhould be rated ſomewhat lower.

By what is called the land-tax in England, it was intended that ſtock ſhould be taxed in the ſame proportion as land. When the tax upon

upon land was at four ſhillings in the pound, or at one-fifth of the ſuppoſed rent, it was intended that ſtock ſhould be taxed at one-fifth of the ſuppoſed intereſt. When the preſent annual land-tax was firſt impoſed, the legal rate of intereſt was ſix per cent. Every hundred pounds ſtock, accordingly, was ſuppoſed to be taxed at twenty-four ſhillings, the fifth part of ſix pounds. Since the legal rate of intereſt has been reduced to five per cent. every hundred pounds ſtock is ſuppoſed to be taxed at twenty ſhillings only. The ſum to be raiſed, by what is called the land-tax, was divided between the country and the principal towns. The greater part of it was laid upon the country; and of what was laid upon the towns, the greater part was aſſeſſed upon the houſes. What remained to be aſſeſſed upon the ſtock or trade of the towns (for the ſtock upon the land was not meant to be taxed) was very much below the real value of that ſtock or trade. Whatever inequalities, therefore, there might be in the original aſſeſſment, gave little diſturbance. Every pariſh and diſtrict ſtill continues to be rated for its land, its houſes, and its ſtock, according to the original aſſeſſment; and the almoſt univerſal proſperity of the country, which in moſt places has raiſed very much the value of all theſe, has rendered thoſe inequalities of ſtill leſs importance now. The rate too upon each diſtrict continuing always the ſame, the uncertainty of this tax, ſo far as it might be aſſeſſed upon the ſtock of any individual,

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vidual, has been very much diminiſhed, as well as rendered of much leſs conſequence. If the greater part of the lands of England are not rated to the land-tax at half their actual value, the greater part of the ſtock of England is, perhaps, ſcarce rated at the fiftieth part of its actual value. In ſome towns the whole land-tax is aſſeſſed upon houſes; as in Weſtminſter, where ſtock and trade are free. It is otherwiſe in London.

In all countries a ſevere inquiſition into the circumſtances of private perſons has been carefully avoided.

At Hamburgh * every inhabitant is obliged to pay to the ſtate, one-fourth per cent. of all that he poſſeſſes; and as the wealth of the people of Hamburgh conſiſts principally in ſtock, this tax may be conſidered as a tax upon ſtock. Every man aſſeſſes himſelf, and, in the preſence of the magiſtrate, puts annually into the public coffer a certain ſum of money, which he declares upon oath to be one-fourth per cent. of all that he poſſeſſes, but without declaring what it amounts to, or being liable to any examination upon that ſubject. This tax is generally ſuppoſed to be paid with great fidelity. In a ſmall republic, where the people have entire confidence in their magiſtrates, are convinced of the neceſſity of the tax for the ſupport of the ſtate, and believe that it will be faithfully applied to that purpoſe, ſuch conſcientious and voluntary payment

* Memoires concernant les Droits, tom. i. p. 74.

may ſometimes be expected. It is not peculiar to the people of Hamburgh. CHAP. II.

The canton of Underwald in Switzerland is frequently ravaged by ſtorms and inundations, and it is thereby expoſed to extraordinary expences. Upon ſuch occaſions the people aſſemble, and every one is ſaid to declare with the greateſt frankneſs what he is worth, in order to be taxed accordingly. At Zurich the law orders, that, in caſes of neceſſity, every one ſhould be taxed in proportion to his revenue; the amount of which, he is obliged to declare upon oath. They have no ſuſpicion, it is ſaid, that any of their fellow-citizens will deceive them. At Baſil the principal revenue of the ſtate ariſes from a ſmall cuſtom upon goods exported. All the citizens make oath that they will pay every three months all the taxes impoſed by the law. All merchants and even all inn-keepers are truſted with keeping themſelves the account of the goods which they ſell either within or without the territory. At the end of every three months they ſend this account to the treaſurer, with the amount of the tax computed at the bottom of it. It is not ſuſpected that the revenue ſuffers by this confidence *.

To oblige every citizen to declare publicly upon oath the amount of his fortune, muſt not, it ſeems, in thoſe Swiſs cantons, be reckoned a hardſhip. At Hamburgh it would be reckoned the greateſt. Merchants engaged in the hazardous

* Memoires concernant les Droits, tome i. p. 163. 166. 171.

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projects of trade, all tremble at the thoughts of being obliged at all times to expose the real state of their circumstances. The ruin of their credit and the miscarriage of their projects, they foresee, would too often be the consequence. A sober and parsimonious people, who are strangers to all such projects, do not feel that they have occasion for any such concealment.

In Holland, soon after the exaltation of the late Prince of Orange to the Stadtholdership, a tax of two per cent. on the fiftieth penny, as it was called, was imposed upon the whole substance of every citizen. Every citizen assessed himself and paid his tax in the same manner as at Hamburgh; and it was in general supposed to have been paid with great fidelity. The people had at that time the greatest affection for their new government, which they had just established by a general insurrection. The tax was to be paid but once; in order to relieve the state in a particular exigency. It was, indeed, too heavy to be permanent. In a country where the market rate of interest seldom exceeds three per cent., a tax of two per cent. amounts to thirteen shillings and fourpence in the pound upon the highest neat revenue which is commonly drawn from stock. It is a tax which very few people could pay without encroaching more or less upon their capitals. In a particular exigency the people may, from great public zeal, make a great effort, and give up even a part of their capital, in order to relieve the state. But it is impossible that they should continue to do so for any considerable

ſiderable time; and if they did, the tax would ſoon ruin them ſo completely as to render them altogether incapable of ſupporting the ſtate.

The tax upon ſtock impoſed by the land-tax bill in England, though it is proportioned to the capital, is not intended to diminiſh or take away any part of that capital. It is meant only to be a tax upon the intereſt of money proportioned to that upon the rent of land; ſo that when the latter is at four ſhillings in the pound, the former may be at four ſhillings in the pound too. The tax at Hamburgh, and the ſtill more moderate taxes of Underwald and Zurich, are meant, in the ſame manner, to be taxes, not upon the capital, but upon the intereſt or neat revenue of ſtock. That of Holland was meant to be a tax upon the capital.

Taxes upon the Profit of particular Employments.

IN ſome countries extraordinary taxes are impoſed upon the profit of ſtock; ſometimes when employed in particular branches of trade, and ſometimes when employed in agriculture.

Of the former kind are in England the tax upon hawkers and pedlars, that upon hackney coaches and chairs, and that which the keepers of ale-houſes pay for a licence to retail ale and ſpirituous liquors. During the late war, another tax of the ſame kind was propoſed upon ſhops. The war having been undertaken, it was ſaid, in defence of the trade of the country, the merchants, who were to profit by it, ought to contribute towards the ſupport of it.

A tax,

A tax, however, upon the profits of ſtock employed in any particular branch of trade, can never fall finally upon the dealers (who muſt in all ordinary caſes have their reaſonable profit, and, where the competition is free, can ſeldom have more than that profit), but always upon the conſumers, who muſt be obliged to pay in the price of the goods the tax which the dealer advances; and generally with ſome overcharge.

A tax of this kind, when it is proportioned to the trade of the dealer, is finally paid by the conſumer, and occaſions no oppreſſion to the dealer. When it is not ſo proportioned, but is the ſame upon all dealers, though in this caſe too it is finally paid by the conſumer, yet it favours the great, and occaſions ſome oppreſſion to the ſmall dealer. The tax of five ſhillings a week upon every hackney-coach, and that of ten ſhillings a year upon every hackney-chair, ſo far as it is advanced by the different keepers of ſuch coaches and chairs, is exactly enough proportioned to the extent of their reſpective dealings. It neither favours the great, nor oppreſſes the ſmaller dealer. The tax of twenty ſhillings a year for a licence to ſell ale; of forty ſhillings for a licence to ſell ſpirituous liquors; and of forty ſhillings more for a licence to ſell wine, being the ſame upon all retailers, muſt neceſſarily give ſome advantage to the great, and occaſion ſome oppreſſion to the ſmall dealers. The former muſt find it more eaſy to get back the tax in the price of their goods than the latter. The moderation of the tax, however, renders this inequality of leſs importance,

and

and it may to many people appear not improper to give ſome diſcouragement to the multiplication of little ale-houſes. The tax upon ſhops, it was intended, ſhould be the ſame upon all ſhops. It could not well have been otherwiſe. It would have been impoſſible to proportion with tolerable exactneſs the tax upon a ſhop to the extent of the trade carried on in it, without ſuch an inquiſition as would have been altogether inſupportable in a free country. If the tax had been conſiderable, it would have oppreſſed the ſmall, and forced almoſt the whole retail trade into the hands of the great dealers. The competition of the former being taken away, the latter would have enjoyed a monopoly of the trade; and, like all other monopoliſts, would ſoon have combined to raiſe their profits much beyond what was neceſſary for the payment of the tax. The final payment, inſtead of falling upon the ſhopkeeper, would have fallen upon the conſumer, with a conſiderable overcharge to the profit of the ſhopkeeper. For theſe reaſons, the project of a tax upon ſhops was laid aſide, and in the room of it was ſubſtituted the ſubſidy 1759.

What in France is called the perſonal taille, is, perhaps, the moſt important tax upon the profits of ſtock employed in agriculture that is levied in any part of Europe.

In the diſorderly ſtate of Europe during the prevalence of the feudal government, the ſovereign was obliged to content himſelf with taxing thoſe who were too weak to refuſe to pay taxes. The great lords, though willing to aſſiſt him

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him upon particular emergencies, refuſed to ſubject themſelves to any conſtant tax, and he was not ſtrong enough to force them. The occupiers of land all over Europe were, the greater part of them, originally bondmen. Through the greater part of Europe they were gradually emancipated. Some of them acquired the property of landed eſtates, which they held by ſome baſe or ignoble tenure, ſometimes under the king, and ſometimes under ſome other great lord, like the ancient copy-holders of England. Others, without acquiring the property, obtained leaſes for terms of years, of the lands which they occupied under their lord, and thus became leſs dependent upon him. The great lords ſeem to have beheld the degree of proſperity and independency which this inferior order of men had thus come to enjoy, with a malignant and contemptuous indignation, and willingly conſented that the ſovereign ſhould tax them. In ſome countries this tax was confined to the lands which were held in property by an ignoble tenure; and, in this caſe, the taille was ſaid to be real. The land-tax eſtabliſhed by the late King of Sardinia, and the taille in the provinces of Languedoc, Provence, Dauphiné, and Brittany; in the generality of Montauban, and in the elections of Agen and Condom, as well as in ſome other diſtricts of France, are taxes upon lands held in property by an ignoble tenure. In other countries the tax was laid upon the ſuppoſed profits of all thoſe who held in farm or leaſe lands belonging to other people, whatever might be the tenure by

By which the proprietor held them; and in this case the taille was said to be personal. In the greater part of those provinces of France, which are called the Countries of Elections, the taille is of this kind. The real taille, as it is imposed only upon a part of the lands of the country, is necessarily an unequal, but it is not always an arbitrary tax, though it is so upon some occasions. The personal taille, as it is intended to be proportioned to the profits of a certain class of people, which can only be guessed at, is necessarily both arbitrary and unequal. CHAP. II.

In France the personal taille at present (1775) annually imposed upon the twenty generalities, called the Countries of Elections, amounts to 40,107,239 livres, 16 sous *. The proportion in which this sum is assessed upon those different provinces, varies from year to year, according to the reports which are made to the King's council concerning the goodness or badness of the crops, as well as other circumstances, which may either increase or diminish their respective abilities to pay. Each generality is divided into a certain number of elections, and the proportion in which the sum imposed upon the whole generality is divided among those different elections, varies likewise from year to year, according to the reports made to the council concerning their respective abilities. It seems impossible that the council, with the best intentions, can ever pro-

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tome ii. p. 17.

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portion with tolerable exactneſs, either of thoſe two aſſeſſments to the real abilities of the province or diſtrict upon which they are reſpectively laid. Ignorance and miſinformation muſt always, more or leſs, miſlead the moſt upright council The proportion which each pariſh ought to ſupport of what is aſſeſſed upon the whole election, and that which each individual ought to ſupport of what is aſſeſſed upon his particular pariſh, are both in the ſame manner varied, from year to year, according as circumſtances are ſuppoſed to require. Theſe circumſtances are judged of, in the one caſe, by the officers of the election; in the other by thoſe of the pariſh; and both the one and the other are, more or leſs, under the direction and influence of the intendant. Not only ignorance and miſinformation, but friendſhip, party animoſity, and private reſentment, are ſaid frequently to miſlead ſuch aſſeſſors. No man ſubject to ſuch a tax, it is evident, can ever be certain, before he is aſſeſſed, of what he is to pay. He cannot even be certain after he is aſſeſſed. If any perſon has been taxed who ought to have been exempted; or if any perſon has been taxed beyond his proportion, though both muſt pay in the mean time, yet if they complain, and make good their complaints, the whole pariſh is reimpoſed next year in order to reimburſe them. If any of the contributors become bankrupt or inſolvent, the collector is obliged to advance his tax, and the whole pariſh is reimpoſed next year in order to reimburſe the collector. If the collector himſelf

ſhould

ſhould become bankrupt, the pariſh which elects him muſt anſwer for his conduct to the receiver-general of the election. But, as it might be troubleſome for the receiver to proſecute the whole pariſh, he takes at his choice five or ſix of the richeſt contributors, and obliges them to make good what had been loſt by the inſolvency of the collector. The pariſh is afterwards reimpoſed in order to reimburſe thoſe five or ſix. Such reimpoſitions are always over and above the taille of the particular year in which they are laid on.

When a tax is impoſed upon the profits of ſtock in a particular branch of trade, the traders are all careful to bring no more goods to market than what they can ſell at a price ſufficient to reimburſe them for advancing the tax. Some of them withdraw a part of their ſtocks from the trade, and the market is more ſparingly ſupplied than before. The price of the goods riſes, and the final payment of the tax falls upon the conſumer. But when a tax is impoſed upon the profits of ſtock employed in agriculture, it is not the intereſt of the farmers to withdraw any part of their ſtock from that employment. Each farmer occupies a certain quantity of land, for which he pays rent. For the proper cultivation of this land a certain quantity of ſtock is neceſſary; and by withdrawing any part of this neceſſary quantity, the farmer is not likely to be more able to pay either the rent or the tax. In order to pay the tax, it can never be his intereſt to diminiſh the quantity of his produce, nor con-

fequently to fupply the market more ſparingly than before. The tax, therefore, will never enable him to raiſe the price of his produce, ſo as to reimburſe himſelf by throwing the final payment upon the conſumer. The farmer, however, muſt have his reaſonable profit as well as every other dealer, otherwiſe he muſt give up the trade. After the impoſition of a tax of this kind, he can get this reaſonable profit only by paying leſs rent to the landlord. The more he is obliged to pay in the way of tax, the leſs he can afford to pay in the way of rent. A tax of this kind impoſed during the currency of a leaſe may, no doubt, diſtreſs or ruin the farmer. Upon the renewal of the leaſe it muſt always fall upon the landlord.

In the countries where the perſonal taille takes place, the farmer is commonly aſſeſſed in proportion to the ſtock which he appears to employ in cultivation. He is, upon this account, frequently afraid to have a good team of horſes or oxen, but endeavours to cultivate with the meaneſt and moſt wretched inſtruments of huſbandry that he can. Such is his diſtruſt in the juſtice of his aſſeſſors, that he counterfeits poverty, and wiſhes to appear ſcarce able to pay any thing for fear of being obliged to pay too much. By this miſerable policy he does not, perhaps, always conſult his own intereſt in the moſt effectual manner; and he probably loſes more by the diminution of his produce than he ſaves by that of his tax. Though, in conſequence of this wretched cultivation the market is, no doubt, ſomewhat

worſe

worſe ſupplied; yet the ſmall riſe of price which this may occaſion, as it is not likely even to indemnify the farmer for the diminution of his produce, it is ſtill leſs likely to enable him to pay more rent to the landlord. The public, the farmer, the landlord, all ſuffer more or leſs by this degraded cultivation. That the perſonal taille tends, in many different ways, to diſcourage cultivation, and conſequently to dry up the principal ſource of the wealth of every great country, I have already had occaſion to obſerve in the third book of this Inquiry. CHAP. II.

What are called poll-taxes in the ſouthern provinces of North America, and in the Weſt Indian iſlands, annual taxes of ſo much a head upon every negroe, are properly taxes upon the profits of a certain ſpecies of ſtock employed in agriculture. As the planters are, the greater part of them, both farmers and landlords, the final payment of the tax falls upon them in their quality of landlords without any retribution.

Taxes of ſo much a head upon the bondmen employed in cultivation, ſeem anciently to have been common all over Europe. There ſubſiſts at preſent a tax of this kind in the empire of Ruſſia. It is probably upon this account that poll-taxes of all kinds have often been repreſented as badges of ſlavery. Every tax, however, is to the perſon who pays it a badge, not of ſlavery, but of liberty. It denotes that he is ſubject to government, indeed, but that, as he has ſome property, he cannot himſelf be the property of a maſter. A poll-tax upon ſlaves is

altogether different from a poll-tax upon freemen. The latter is paid by the perſons upon whom it is impoſed; the former by a different ſet of perſons. The latter is either altogether arbitrary or altogether unequal, and in moſt caſes is both the one and the other; the former, though in ſome reſpects unequal, different ſlaves being of different values, is in no reſpects arbitrary. Every maſter who knows the number of his own ſlaves, knows exactly what he has to pay. Thoſe different taxes, however, being called by the ſame name, have been conſidered as of the ſame nature.

The taxes which in Holland are impoſed upon men and maid ſervants, are taxes, not upon ſtock, but upon expence; and ſo far reſemble the taxes upon conſumable commodities. The tax of a guinea a head for every man ſervant, which has lately been impoſed in Great Britain, is of the ſame kind. It falls heavieſt upon the middling rank. A man of two hundred a year may keep a ſingle man ſervant. A man of ten thouſand a year will not keep fifty. It does not affect the poor.

Taxes upon the profits of ſtock in particular employments can never affect the intereſt of money. Nobody will lend his money for leſs intereſt to thoſe who exerciſe the taxed, than to thoſe who exerciſe the untaxed employments. Taxes upon the revenue ariſing from ſtock in all employments, where the government attempts to levy them with any degree of exactneſs, will, in many caſes, fall upon the intereſt of money.

The

The Vingtieme, or twentieth penny, in France, is a tax of the ſame kind with what is called the land-tax in England, and is aſſeſſed, in the ſame manner, upon the revenue ariſing from land, houſes, and ſtock. So far as it affects ſtock it is aſſeſſed, though not with great rigour, yet with much more exactneſs than that part of the land-tax of England which is impoſed upon the ſame fund. It, in many caſes, falls altogether upon the intereſt of money. Money is frequently ſunk in France upon what are called Contracts for the conſtitution of a rent; that is, perpetual annuities redeemable at any time by the debtor upon repayment of the ſum originally advanced, but of which this redemption is not exigible by the creditor except in particular caſes. The Vingtieme ſeems not to have raiſed the rate of thoſe annuities, though it is exactly levied upon them all.

Appendix to Articles I. and II.

Taxes upon the capital Value of Land, Houſes, and Stock.

WHILE property remains in the poſſeſſion of the ſame perſon, whatever permanent taxes may have been impoſed upon it, they have never been intended to diminiſh or take away any part of its capital value, but only ſome part of the revenue ariſing from it. But when property changes hands, when it is tranſmitted either from the dead to the living, or from the living to the living, ſuch taxes have frequently been impoſed

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upon it as neceſſarily take away ſome part of its capital value.

The transference of all ſorts of property from the dead to the living, and that of immoveable property, of lands and houſes, from the living to the living, are tranſactions which are in their nature either public and notorious, or ſuch as cannot be long concealed. Such tranſactions, therefore, may be taxed directly. The tranſference of ſtock, or moveable property, from the living to the living, by the lending of money, is frequently a ſecret tranſaction, and may always be made ſo. It cannot eaſily, therefore, be taxed directly. It has been taxed indirectly in two different ways; firſt, by requiring that the deed, containing the obligation to repay, ſhould be written upon paper or parchment which had paid a certain ſtamp-duty, otherwiſe not to be valid; ſecondly, by requiring, under the like penalty of invalidity, that it ſhould be recorded either in a public or ſecret regiſter, and by impoſing certain duties upon ſuch regiſtration. Stamp-duties and duties of regiſtration have frequently been impoſed likewiſe upon the deeds transferring property of all kinds from the dead to the living, and upon thoſe transferring immoveable property from the living to the living, tranſactions which might eaſily have been taxed directly.

The Viceſima Hereditatum, the twentieth penny of inheritances, impoſed by Auguſtus upon the ancient Romans, was a tax upon the transference

transference of property from the dead to the living. Dion Caſſius*, the author who writes concerning it the leaſt indiſtinctly, ſays, that it was impoſed upon all ſucceſſions, legacies, and donations, in caſe of death, except upon thoſe to the neareſt relations, and to the poor. CHAP. II.

Of the ſame kind is the Dutch tax upon ſucceſſions †. Collateral ſucceſſions are taxed, according to the degree of relation, from five to thirty per cent. upon the whole value of the ſucceſſion. Teſtamentary donations, or legacies to collaterals, are ſubject to the like duties. Thoſe from huſband to wife, or from wife to huſband, to the fiftieth penny. The Luctuoſa Hereditas, the mournful ſucceſſion of aſcendents to deſcendents, to the twentieth penny only. Direct ſucceſſions, or thoſe of deſcendents to aſcendents, pay no tax. The death of a father, to ſuch of his children as live in the ſame houſe with him, is ſeldom attended with any increaſe, and frequently with a conſiderable diminution of revenue; by the loſs of his induſtry, of his office, or of ſome life-rent eſtate, of which he may have been in poſſeſſion. That tax would be cruel and oppreſſive which aggravated their loſs by taking from them any part of his ſucceſſion. It may, however, ſometimes be otherwiſe with thoſe children who, in the language of the Roman law, are ſaid to be emancipated; in that of the

* Lib. 55. See alſo Burman de Vectigalibus Pop. Rom. cap. xi. and Bouchaud de l' impôt du vingtieme ſur les ſucceſſions.

† See Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tome i. p. 225.

Scotch

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Scotch law, to be foris-familiated: that is, who have received their portion, have got families of their own, and are ſupported by funds ſeparate and independent of thoſe of their father. Whatever part of his ſucceſſion might come to ſuch children, would be a real addition to their fortune, and might therefore, perhaps, without more inconveniency than what attends all duties of this kind, be liable to ſome tax.

The caſualties of the feudal law were taxes upon the transference of land, both from the dead to the living, and from the living to the living. In ancient times they conſtituted in every part of Europe one of the principal branches of the revenue of the crown.

The heir of every immediate vaſſal of the crown paid a certain duty, generally a year's rent, upon receiving the inveſtiture of the eſtate. If the heir was a minor, the whole rents of the eſtate, during the continuance of the minority, devolved to the ſuperior without any other charge, beſides the maintenance of the minor, and the payment of the widow's dower, when there happened to be a dowager upon the land. When the minor came to be of age, another tax, called Relief, was ſtill due to the ſuperior, which generally amounted likewiſe to a year's rent. A long minority, which in the preſent times ſo frequently diſburdens a great eſtate of all its incumbrances, and reſtores the family to their ancient ſplendour, could in thoſe times have no ſuch effect. The waſte, and not the diſincumbrance

brance of the eſtate, was the common effect of a long minority. CHAP. II.

By the feudal law, the vaſſal could not alienate without the conſent of his ſuperior, who generally extorted a fine or compoſition for granting it. This fine, which was at firſt arbitrary, came in many countries to be regulated at a certain portion of the price of the land. In ſome countries, where the greater part of the other feudal cuſtoms have gone into diſuſe, this tax upon the alienation of land ſtill continues to make a very conſiderable branch of the revenue of the ſovereign. In the canton of Berne it is ſo high as a ſixth part of the price of all noble fiefs; and a tenth part of that of all ignoble ones *. In the canton of Lucerne the tax upon the ſale of lands is not univerſal, and takes place only in certain diſtricts. But if any perſon ſells his land, in order to remove out of the territory, he pays ten per cent. upon the whole price of the ſale †. Taxes of the ſame kind upon the ſale either of all lands, or of lands held by certain tenures, take place in many other countries, and make a more or leſs conſiderable branch of the revenue of the ſovereign.

Such tranſactions may be taxed indirectly, by means either of ſtamp-duties, or of duties upon regiſtration; and thoſe duties either may or may not be proportioned to the value of the ſubject which is transferred.

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tome i. p. 154.

† Id. p. 157.

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In Great Britain the ſtamp-duties are higher or lower, not ſo much according to the value of the property transferred (an eighteen-penny or half-crown ſtamp being ſufficient upon a bond for the largeſt ſum of money) as according to the nature of the deed. The higheſt do not exceed ſix pounds upon every ſheet of paper, or ſkin of parchment; and theſe high duties fall chiefly upon grants from the crown, and upon certain law proceedings, without any regard to the value of the ſubject. There are in Great Britain no duties on the regiſtration of deeds or writings, except the fees of the officers who keep the regiſter; and theſe are ſeldom more than a reaſonable recompence for their labour. The crown derives no revenue from them.

In Holland* there are both ſtamp duties and duties upon regiſtration; which in ſome caſes are, and in ſome are not, proportioned, to the value of the property transferred. All teſtaments muſt be written upon ſtamped paper, of which the price is proportioned to the property diſpoſed of, ſo that there are ſtamps which coſt from three pence, or three ſtivers a ſheet, to three hundred florins, equal to about twenty-ſeven pounds ten ſhillings of our money. If the ſtamp is of an inferior price to what the teſtator ought to have made uſe of, his ſucceſſion is confiſcated. This is over and above all their other taxes on ſucceſſion. Except bills of ex-

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tome i. p. 223, 224, 225.

change,

change, and ſome other mercantile bills, all other deeds, bonds, and contracts, are ſubject to a ſtamp-duty. This duty, however, does not riſe in proportion to the value of the ſubject. All ſales of land and of houſes, and all mortgages upon either, muſt be regiſtered, and, upon regiſtration, pay a duty to the ſtate of two and a half per cent. upon the amount of the price or of the mortgage. This duty is extended to the ſale of all ſhips and veſſels of more than two tons burthen, whether decked or undecked. Theſe, it ſeems, are conſidered as a ſort of houſes upon the water. The ſale of moveables, when it is ordered by a court of juſtice, is ſubject to the like duty of two and a half per cent.

In France there are both ſtamp-duties and duties upon regiſtration. The former are conſidered as a branch of the aides or exciſe, and in the provinces where thoſe duties take place, are levied by the exciſe officers. The latter are conſidered as a branch of the domain of the crown, and are levied by a different ſet of officers.

Thoſe modes of taxation, by ſtamp-duties and by duties upon regiſtration, are of very modern invention. In the courſe of little more than a century, however, ſtamp-duties have, in Europe, become almoſt univerſal, and duties upon regiſtration extremely common. There is no art which one government ſooner learns of another, than that of draining money from the pockets of the people.

Taxes upon the transference of property from the dead to the living, fall finally as well as immediately

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mediately upon the perſon to whom the property is transferred. Taxes upon the ſale of land fall altogether upon the ſeller. The ſeller is almoſt always under the neceſſity of ſelling, and muſt, therefore, take ſuch a price as he can get. The buyer is ſcarce ever under the neceſſity of buying, and will, therefore, only give ſuch a price as he likes. He conſiders what the land will coſt him in tax and price together. The more he is obliged to pay in the way of tax, the leſs he will be diſpoſed to give in the way of price. Such taxes, therefore, fall almoſt always upon a neceſſitous perſon, and muſt, therefore, be frequently very cruel and oppreſſive. Taxes upon the ſale of new-built houſes, where the building is ſold without the ground, fall generally upon the buyer, becauſe the builder muſt generally have his profit; otherwiſe he muſt give up the trade. If he advances the tax, therefore, the buyer muſt generally repay it to him. Taxes upon the ſale of old houſes, for the ſame reaſon as thoſe upon the ſale of land, fall generally upon the ſeller; whom, in moſt caſes, either conveniency or neceſſity obliges to ſell. The number of new-built houſes that are annually brought to market, is more or leſs regulated by the demand. Unleſs the demand is ſuch as to afford the builder his profit, after paying all expences, he will build no more houſes. The number of old houſes which happen at any time to come to market is regulated by accidents, of which the greater part have no relation to the demand. Two or three great bankruptcies in a mercantile town,

town, will bring many houſes to ſale, which muſt be ſold for what can be got for them. Taxes upon the ſale of ground-rents fall altogether upon the ſeller; for the ſame reaſon as thoſe upon the ſale of land. Stamp-duties, and duties upon the regiſtration of bonds and contracts for borrowed money, fall altogether upon the borrower, and, in fact, are always paid by him. Duties of the ſame kind upon law proceedings fall upon the ſuitors. They reduce to both the capital value of the ſubject in diſpute. The more it coſts to acquire any property, the leſs muſt be the neat value of it when acquired.

All taxes upon the transference of property of every kind, ſo far as they diminiſh the capital value of that property, tend to diminiſh the funds deſtined for the maintenance of productive labour. They are all more or leſs unthrifty taxes that increaſe the revenue of the ſovereign, which ſeldom maintains any but unproductive labourers; at the expence of the capital of the people, which maintains none put productive.

Such taxes, even when they are proportioned to the value of the property transferred, are ſtill unequal; the frequency of transference not being always equal in property of equal value. When they are not proportioned to this value, which is the caſe with the greater part of the ſtamp-duties, and duties of regiſtration, they are ſtill more ſo. They are in no reſpect arbitrary, but are or may be in all caſes perfectly clear and certain. Though they ſometimes fall upon the perſon who is not very able to pay; the time of payment

payment is in moſt caſes ſufficiently convenient for him. When the payment becomes due, he muſt in moſt caſes have the money to pay. They are levied at very little expence, and in general ſubject the contributors to no other inconveniency beſides always the unavoidable one of paying the tax.

In France the ſtamp duties are not much complained of. Thoſe of regiſtration, which they call the Contrôle, are. They give occaſion, it is pretended, to much extortion in the officers of the farmers-general who collect the tax, which is in a great meaſure arbitrary and uncertain. In the greater part of the libels which have been written againſt the preſent ſyſtem of finances in France, the abuſes of the Contrôle make a principal article. Uncertainty, however, does not ſeem to be neceſſarily inherent in the nature of ſuch taxes. If the popular complaints are well founded, the abuſe muſt ariſe, not ſo much from the nature of the tax, as from the want of preciſion and diſtinctneſs in the words of the edicts or laws which impoſe it.

The regiſtration of mortgages, and in general of all rights upon immoveable property, as it gives great ſecurity both to creditors and purchaſers, is extremely advantageous to the public. That of the greater part of deeds of other kinds is frequently inconvenient, and even dangerous to individuals, without any advantage to the public. All regiſters which, it is acknowledged, ought to be kept ſecret, ought certainly never to exiſt. The credit of individuals ought certainly never to depend upon ſo very ſlender a ſecu-

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rity as the probity and religion of the inferior officers of revenue. But where the fees of regiſtration have been made a ſource of revenue to the ſovereign, regiſter offices have commonly been multiplied without end, both for the deeds which ought to be regiſtered, and for thoſe which ought not. In France there are ſeveral different ſorts of ſecret regiſters. This abuſe, though not perhaps a neceſſary, it muſt be acknowledged, is a very natural effect of ſuch taxes. CHAP. II.

Such ſtamp-duties as thoſe in England upon cards and dice, upon news-papers and periodical pamphlets, &c. are properly taxes upon conſumption; the final payment falls upon the perſons who uſe or conſume ſuch commodities. Such ſtamp-duties as thoſe upon licences to retail ale, wine, and ſpirituous liquors, though intended, perhaps, to fall upon the profits of the retailers, are likewiſe finally paid by the conſumers of thoſe liquors. Such taxes, though called by the ſame name, and levied by the ſame officers and in the ſame manner with the ſtamp-duties abovementioned upon the transference of property, are however of a quite different nature, and fall upon quite different funds.

Article III.

Taxes upon the Wages of Labour.

THE wages of the inferior claſſes of workmen, I have endeavoured to ſhow in the firſt book, are every where neceſſarily regulated by

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two different circumſtances; the demand for labour, and the ordinary or average price of proviſions. The demand for labour, according as it happens to be either increaſing, ſtationary, or declining; or to require an increaſing, ſtationary, or declining population, regulates the ſubſiſtence of the labourer, and determines in what degree it ſhall be, either liberal, moderate, or ſcanty. The ordinary or average price of proviſions determines the quantity of money which muſt be paid to the workman in order to enable him, one year with another, to purchaſe this liberal, moderate, or ſcanty ſubſiſtence. While the demand for labour and the price of proviſions, therefore, remain the ſame, a direct tax upon the wages of labour can have no other effect than to raiſe them ſomewhat higher than the tax. Let us ſuppoſe, for example, that in a particular place the demand for labour and the price of proviſions were ſuch, as to render ten ſhillings a week the ordinary wages of labour; and that a tax of one-fifth, or four ſhillings in the pound, was impoſed upon wages. If the demand for labour and the price of proviſions remained the ſame, it would ſtill be neceſſary that the labourer ſhould in that place earn ſuch a ſubſiſtence as could be bought only for ten ſhillings a week, or that after paying the tax he ſhould have ten ſhillings a week free wages. But in order to leave him ſuch free wages after paying ſuch a tax, the price of labour muſt in that place ſoon riſe, not to twelve ſhillings a week only, but to twelve and ſixpence; that is, in order to enable him to

pay a tax of one-fifth, his wages must necessarily soon rise, not one-fifth part only, but one fourth. Whatever was the proportion of the tax, the wages of labour must in all cases rise, not only in that proportion, but in a higher proportion. If the tax, for example, was one-tenth, the wages of labour must necessarily soon rise, not one-tenth part only, but one-eighth. CHAP. II.

A direct tax upon the wages of labour, therefore, though the labourer might perhaps pay it out of his hand, could not properly be said to be even advanced by him; at least if the demand for labour and the average price of provisions remained the same after the tax as before it. In all such cases, not only the tax, but something more than the tax, would in reality be advanced by the person who immediately employed him. The final payment would in different cases fall upon different persons. The rise which such a tax might occasion in the wages of manufacturing labour would be advanced by the master manufacturer, who would both be entitled and obliged to charge it, with a profit, upon the price of his goods. The final payment of this rise of wages, therefore, together with the additional profit of the master manufacturer, would fall upon the consumer. The rise which such a tax might occasion in the wages of country labour would be advanced by the farmer, who, in order to maintain the same number of labourers as before, would be obliged to employ a greater capital. In order to get back this greater capital, together with the ordinary profits

of ſtock, it would be neceſſary that he ſhould retain a larger portion, or what comes to the ſame thing, the price of a larger portion, of the produce of the land, and conſequently that he ſhould pay leſs rent to the landlord. The final payment of this riſe of wages, therefore, would in this caſe fall upon the landlord, together with the additional profit of the farmer who had advanced it. In all caſes a direct tax upon the wages of labour muſt, in the long-run, occaſion both a greater reduction in the rent of land, and a greater riſe in the price of manufactured goods, than would have followed from the proper aſſeſſment of a ſum equal to the produce of the tax, partly upon the rent of land, and partly upon conſumable commodities.

If direct taxes upon the wages of labour have not always occaſioned a proportionable riſe in thoſe wages, it is becauſe they have generally occaſioned a conſiderable fall in the demand for labour. The declenſion of induſtry, the decreaſe of employment for the poor, the diminution of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, have generally been the effects of ſuch taxes. In conſequence of them, however, the price of labour muſt always be higher than it otherwiſe would have been in the actual ſtate of the demand: and this enhancement of price, together with the profit of thoſe who advance it, muſt always be finally paid by the landlords and conſumers.

A tax upon the wages of country labour does not raiſe the price of the rude produce of land in proportion

proportion to the tax; for the same reason that a tax upon the farmer's profit does not raise that price in that proportion. CHAP. II.

Absurd and destructive as such taxes are, however, they take place in many countries. In France that part of the taille which is charged upon the industry of workmen and day-labourers in country villages, is properly a tax of this kind. Their wages are computed according to the common rate of the district in which they reside, and that they may be as little liable as possible to any over-charge, their yearly gains are estimated at no more than two hundred working days in the year*. The tax of each individual is varied from year to year according to different circumstances, of which the collector or the commissary, whom the intendant appoints to assist him, are the judges. In Bohemia, in consequence of the alteration in the system of finances which was begun in 1748, a very heavy tax is imposed upon the industry of artificers. They are divided into four classes. The highest class pay a hundred florins a year; which, at two-and-twenty-pence halfpenny a florin, amounts to 9 *l.* 7 *s.* 6 *d.* The second class are taxed at seventy; the third at fifty; and the fourth, comprehending artificers in villages, and the lowest class of those in towns, at twenty-five florins †.

The recompence of ingenious artists and of men of liberal professions, I have endeavoured to show in the first book, necessarily keeps a

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. ii. p. 108.

† Id. tom. iii. p. 87.

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certain proportion to the emoluments of inferior trades. A tax upon this recompence, therefore, could have no other effect than to raiſe it ſomewhat higher than in proportion to the tax. If it did not riſe in this manner, the ingenious arts and the liberal profeſſions, being no longer upon a level with other trades, would be ſo much deſerted that they would ſoon return to that level.

The emoluments of offices are not, like thoſe of trades and profeſſions, regulated by the free competition of the market, and do not, therefore, always bear a juſt proportion to what the nature of the employment requires. They are, perhaps, in moſt countries, higher than it requires; the perſons who have the adminiſtration of government being generally diſpoſed to reward both themſelves, and their immediate dependents, rather more than enough. The emoluments of offices, therefore, can in moſt caſes very well bear to be taxed. The perſons, beſides, who enjoy public offices, eſpecially the more lucrative, are in all countries the objects of general envy; and a tax upon their emoluments, even though it ſhould be ſomewhat higher than upon any other ſort of revenue, is always a very popular tax. In England, for example, when by the land-tax every other ſort of revenue was ſuppoſed to be aſſeſſed at four ſhillings in the pound, it was very popular to lay a real tax of five ſhillings and ſixpence in the pound upon the ſalaries of offices which exceeded a hundred pounds a year; the penſions of the younger branches of the royal family, the pay of the officers of the army and navy, and a few

few others leſs obnoxious to envy excepted. There are in England no other direct taxes upon the wages of labour.

Article IV.

Taxes which, it is intended, ſhould fall indifferently upon every different Species of Revenue.

THE taxes which, it is intended, ſhould fall indifferently upon every different ſpecies of revenue, are capitation taxes, and taxes upon conſumable commodities. Theſe muſt be paid indifferently from whatever revenue the contributors may poſſeſs; from the rent of their land, from the profits of their ſtock, or from the wages of their labour.

Capitation Taxes.

CAPITATION taxes, if it is attempted to proportion them to the fortune or revenue of each contributor, become altogether arbitrary. The ſtate of a man's fortune varies from day to day, and without an inquiſition more intolerable than any tax, and renewed at leaſt once every year, can only be gueſſed at. His aſſeſſment, therefore, muſt in moſt caſes depend upon the good or bad humour of his aſſeſſors, and muſt, therefore, be altogether arbitrary and uncertain.

Capitation taxes, if they are proportioned not to the ſuppoſed fortune, but to the rank of each contributor, become altogether unequal;

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the degrees of fortune being frequently unequal in the ſame degree of rank.

Such taxes, therefore, if it is attempted to render them equal, become altogether arbitrary and uncertain; and if it is attempted to render them certain and not arbitrary, become altogether unequal. Let the tax be light or heavy, uncertainty is always a great grievance. In a light tax a conſiderable degree of inequality may be ſupported; in a heavy one it is altogether intolerable.

In the different poll-taxes which took place in England during the reign of William III. the contributors were, the greater part of them, aſſeſſed according to the degree of their rank; as dukes, marquiſſes, earls, viſcounts, barons, eſquires, gentlemen, the eldeſt and youngeſt ſons of peers, &c. All ſhopkeepers and tradeſmen worth more than three hundred pounds, that is, the better ſort of them, were ſubject to the ſame aſſeſſment; how great ſoever might be the difference in their fortunes. Their rank was more conſidered than their fortune. Several of thoſe who in the firſt poll-tax were rated according to their ſuppoſed fortune, were afterwards rated according to their rank. Serjeants, attornies, and proctors at law, who in the firſt poll-tax were aſſeſſed at three ſhillings in the pound of their ſuppoſed income, were afterwards aſſeſſed as gentlemen. In the aſſeſſment of a tax which was not very heavy, a conſiderable degree of inequality had been found leſs inſupportable than any degree of uncertainty.

In

In the capitation which has been levied in France without any interruption ſince the beginning of the preſent century, the higheſt orders of people are rated according to their rank by an invariable tariff; the lower orders of people, according to what is ſuppoſed to be their fortune, by an aſſeſſment which varies from year to year. The officers of the King's court, the judges and other officers in the ſuperior courts of juſtice, the officers of the troops, &c. are aſſeſſed in the firſt manner. The inferior ranks of people in the provinces are aſſeſſed in the ſecond. In France the great eaſily ſubmit to a conſiderable degree of inequality in a tax which, ſo far as it affects them, is not a very heavy one; but could not brook the arbitrary aſſeſſment of an intendant. The inferior ranks of people muſt, in that country, ſuffer patiently the uſage which their ſuperiors think proper to give them.

In England the different poll-taxes never produced the ſum which had been expected from them, or which, it was ſuppoſed, they might have produced, had they been exactly levied. In France the capitation always produces the ſum expected from it. The mild government of England, when it aſſeſſed the different ranks of people to the poll-tax, contented itſelf with what that aſſeſſment happened to produce; and required no compenſation for the loſs which the ſtate might ſuſtain either by thoſe who could not pay, or by thoſe who would not pay (for there were many ſuch), and who, by the indulgent

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execution of the law, were not forced to pay. The more ſevere government of France aſſeſſes upon each generality a certain ſum, which the intendant muſt find as he can. If any province complains of being aſſeſſed too high, it may, in the aſſeſſment of next year, obtain an abatement proportioned to the over-charge of the year before. But it muſt pay in the mean time. The intendant, in order to be ſure of finding the ſum aſſeſſed upon his generality, was impowered to aſſeſs it in a larger ſum, that the failure or inability of ſome of the contributors might be compenſated by the over-charge of the reſt; and till 1765, the fixation of this ſurplus aſſeſſment was left altogether to his diſcretion. In that year indeed the council aſſumed this power to itſelf. In the capitation of the provinces, it is obſerved by the perfectly well-informed author of the Memoirs upon the impoſitions in France, the proportion which falls upon the nobility, and upon thoſe whoſe privileges exempt them from the taille, is the leaſt conſiderable. The largeſt falls upon thoſe ſubject to the taille, who are aſſeſſed to the capitation at ſo much a pound of what they pay to that other tax.

Capitation taxes, ſo far as they are levied upon the lower ranks of people, are direct taxes upon the wages of labour, and are attended with all the inconveniencies of ſuch taxes.

Capitation taxes are levied at little expence; and, where they are rigorouſly exacted, afford a very ſure revenue to the ſtate. It is upon this account that in countries where the eaſe, comfort,

fort, and ſecurity of the inferior ranks of people are little attended to, capitation taxes are very common. It is in general, however, but a ſmall part of the public revenue, which, in a great empire, has ever been drawn from ſuch taxes; and the greateſt ſum which they have ever afforded, might always have been found in ſome other way much more convenient to the people. CHAP. II.

Taxes upon conſumable Commodities.

THE impoſſibility of taxing the people, in proportion to their revenue, by any capitation, ſeems to have given occaſion to the invention of taxes upon conſumable commodities. The ſtate not knowing how to tax, directly and proportionably, the revenue of its ſubjects, endeavours to tax it indirectly by taxing their expence, which, it is ſuppoſed, will in moſt caſes be nearly in proportion to their revenue. Their expence is taxed by taxing the conſumable commodities upon which it is laid out.

Conſumable commodities are either neceſſaries or luxuries.

By neceſſaries I underſtand, not only the commodities which are indiſpenſably neceſſary for the ſupport of life, but whatever the cuſtom of the country renders it indecent for creditable people, even of the loweſt order, to be without. A linen ſhirt, for example, is, ſtrictly ſpeaking, not a neceſſary of life. The Greeks and Romans lived, I ſuppoſe, very comfortably, though they had

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had no linen. But in the preſent times, through the greater part of Europe, a creditable day-labourer would be aſhamed to appear in public without a linen ſhirt, the want of which would be ſuppoſed to denote that diſgraceful degree of poverty, which, it is preſumed, no body can well fall into without extreme bad conduct. Cuſtom, in the ſame manner, has rendered leather ſhoes a neceſſary of life in England. The pooreſt creditable perſon of either ſex would be aſhamed to appear in public without them. In Scotland, cuſtom has rendered them a neceſſary of life to the loweſt order of men; but not to the ſame order of women, who may, without any diſcredit, walk about bare-footed. In France, they are neceſſaries neither to men nor to women; the loweſt rank of both ſexes appearing there publicly, without any diſcredit, ſometimes in wooden ſhoes, and ſometimes bare-footed. Under neceſſaries therefore, I comprehend, not only thoſe things which nature, but thoſe things which the eſtabliſhed rules of decency have rendered neceſſary to the loweſt rank of people. All other things I call luxuries; without meaning by this appellation, to throw the ſmalleſt degree of reproach upon the temperate uſe of them. Beer and ale, for example, in Great Britain, and wine, even in the wine countries, I call luxuries. A man of any rank may, without any reproach, abſtain totally from taſting ſuch liquors. Nature does not render them neceſſary for the ſupport of life;

and

and cuſtom nowhere renders it indecent to live without them. CHAP. II.

As the wages of labour are every where regulated, partly by the demand for it, and partly by the average price of the neceſſary articles of ſubſiſtence; whatever raiſes this average price muſt neceſſarily raiſe thoſe wages, ſo that the labourer may ſtill be able to purchaſe that quantity of thoſe neceſſary articles which the ſtate of the demand for labour, whether increaſing, ſtationary, or declining, requires that he ſhould have *. A tax upon thoſe articles neceſſarily raiſes their price ſomewhat higher than the amount of the tax, becauſe the dealer, who advances the tax, muſt generally get it back with a profit. Such a tax muſt, therefore, occaſion a riſe in the wages of labour proportionable to this riſe of price.

It is thus that a tax upon the neceſſaries of life, operates exactly in the ſame manner as a direct tax upon the wages of labour. The labourer, though he may pay it out of his hand, cannot, for any conſiderable time at leaſt, be properly ſaid even to advance it. It muſt always in the long-run be advanced to him by his immediate employer in the advanced rate of his wages. His employer, if he is a manufacturer, will charge upon the price of his goods this riſe of wages, together with a profit; ſo that the final payment of the tax, together with this over-charge, will fall upon the conſumer. If his employer is a

* See Book I. Chap. 8.

farmer,

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farmer, the final payment, together with a like over-charge, will fall upon the rent of the landlord.

It is otherwiſe with taxes upon what I call luxuries; even upon thoſe of the poor. The riſe in the price of the taxed commodities, will not neceſſarily occaſion any riſe in the wages of labour. A tax upon tobacco, for example, though a luxury of the poor as well as of the rich, will not raiſe wages. Though it is taxed in England at three times, and in France at fifteen times its original price, thoſe high duties ſeem to have no effect upon the wages of labour. The ſame thing may be ſaid of the taxes upon tea and ſugar; which in England and Holland have become luxuries of the loweſt ranks of people; and of thoſe upon chocolate, which in Spain is ſaid to have become ſo. The different taxes which in Great Britain have, in the courſe of the preſent century, been impoſed upon ſpirituous liquors, are not ſuppoſed to have had any effect upon the wages of labour. The riſe in the price of porter, occaſioned by an additional tax of three ſhillings upon the barrel of ſtrong beer, has not raiſed the wages of common labour in London. Theſe were about eighteen pence and twenty-pence a day before the tax, and they are not more now.

The high price of ſuch commodities does not neceſſarily diminiſh the ability of the inferior ranks of people to bring up families. Upon the ſober and induſtrious poor, taxes upon ſuch commodities act as ſumptuary laws, and diſpoſe them either to moderate, or to refrain altogether from the

the uſe of ſuperfluities which they can no longer eaſily afford. Their ability to bring up families, in conſequence of this forced frugality, inſtead of being diminiſhed, is frequently, perhaps, increaſed by the tax. It is the ſober and induſtrious poor who generally bring up the moſt numerous families, and who principally ſupply the demand for uſeful labour. All the poor, indeed, are not ſober and induſtrious, and the diſſolute and diſorderly might continue to indulge themſelves in the uſe of ſuch commodities after this riſe of price in the ſame manner as before; without regarding the diſtreſs which this indulgence might bring upon their families. Such diſorderly perſons, however, ſeldom rear up numerous families; their children generally periſhing from neglect, miſmanagement, and the ſcantineſs or unwholeſomeneſs of their food. If by the ſtrength of their conſtitution they ſurvive the hardſhips to which the bad conduct of their parents expoſes them; yet the example of that bad conduct commonly corrupts their morals; ſo that, inſtead of being uſeful to ſociety by their induſtry, they become public nuiſances by their vices and diſorders. Though the advanced price of the luxuries of the poor, therefore, might increaſe ſomewhat the diſtreſs of ſuch diſorderly families, and thereby diminiſh ſomewhat their ability to bring up children; it would not probably diminiſh much the uſeful population of the country.

CHAP. II.

Any riſe in the average price of neceſſaries, unleſs it is compenſated by a proportionable riſe in the wages of labour, muſt neceſſarily diminiſh more

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more or leſs the ability of the poor to bring up numerous families, and conſequently to ſupply the demand for uſeful labour; whatever may be the ſtate of that demand, whether increaſing, ſtationary, or declining; or ſuch as requires an increaſing, ſtationary, or declining population.

Taxes upon luxuries have no tendency to raiſe the price of any other commodities except that of the commodities taxed. Taxes upon neceſſaries, by raiſing the wages of labour, neceſſarily tend to raiſe the price of all manufactures, and conſequently to diminiſh the extent of their ſale and conſumption. Taxes upon luxuries are finally paid by the conſumers of the commodities taxed, without any retribution. They fall indifferently upon every ſpecies of revenue, the wages of labour, the profits of ſtock, and the rent of land. Taxes upon neceſſaries, ſo far as they affect the labouring poor, are finally paid, partly by landlords in the diminiſhed rent of their lands, and partly by rich conſumers, whether landlords or others, in the advanced price of manufactured goods; and always with a conſiderable overcharge. The advanced price of ſuch manufactures as are real neceſſaries of life, and are deſtined for the conſumption of the poor, of coarſe woollens, for example, muſt be compenſated to the poor by a farther advancement of their wages. The middling and ſuperior ranks of people, if they underſtood their own intereſt, ought always to oppoſe all taxes upon the neceſſaries of life, as well as all direct taxes upon the wages of labour. The final payment

ment of both the one and the other falls altogether upon themſelves, and always with a conſiderable over-charge. They fall heavieſt upon the landlords, who always pay in a double capacity; in that of landlords, by the reduction of their rent; and in that of rich conſumers, by the increaſe of their expence. The obſervation of Sir Matthew Decker, that certain taxes are, in the price of certain goods, ſometimes repeated and accumulated four or five times, is perfectly juſt with regard to taxes upon the neceſſaries of life. In the price of leather, for example, you muſt pay, not only for the tax upon the leather of your own ſhoes, but for a part of that upon thoſe of the ſhoe-maker and the tanner. You muſt pay too for the tax upon the ſalt, upon the ſoap, and upon the candles which thoſe workmen conſume while employed in your ſervice, and for the tax upon the leather, which the ſalt-maker, the ſoap-maker, and the candle-maker conſume while employed in their ſervice. CHAP. II.

In Great Britain, the principal taxes upon the neceſſaries of life are thoſe upon the four commodities juſt now mentioned, ſalt, leather, ſoap, and candles.

Salt is a very ancient and a very univerſal ſubject of taxation. It was taxed among the Romans, and it is ſo at preſent in, I believe, every part of Europe. The quantity annually conſumed by any individual is ſo ſmall, and may be purchaſed ſo gradually, that nobody, it ſeems to have been thought, could feel very ſenſibly even a pretty heavy tax upon it. It is

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in England taxed at three ſhillings and four-pence a buſhel; about three times the original price of the commodity. In ſome other countries the tax is ſtill higher. Leather is a real neceſſary of life. The uſe of linen renders ſoap ſuch. In countries where the winter nights are long, candles are a neceſſary inſtrument of trade. Leather and ſoap are in Great Britain taxed at three halfpence a pound; candles at a penny; taxes which, upon the original price of leather, may amount to about eight or ten per cent.; upon that of ſoap to about twenty or five and twenty per cent.; and upon that of candles to about fourteen or fifteen per cent.; taxes which, though lighter than that upon ſalt, are ſtill very heavy. As all thoſe four commodities are real neceſſaries of life, ſuch heavy taxes upon them muſt increaſe ſomewhat the expence of the ſober and induſtrious poor, and muſt conſequently raiſe more or leſs the wages of their labour.

In a country where the winters are ſo cold as in Great Britain, fuel is, during that ſeaſon, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the word, a neceſſary of life, not only for the purpoſe of dreſſing victuals, but for the comfortable ſubſiſtence of many different ſorts of workmen who work within doors; and coals are the cheapeſt of all fuel. The price of fuel has ſo important an influence upon that of labour, that all over Great Britain manufactures have confined themſelves principally to the coal countries; other parts of the country, on account of the high price of this neceſſary article, not being able to work ſo cheap. In ſome manufactures,

factures, beſides, coal is a neceſſary inſtrument of trade; as in thoſe of glaſs, iron, and all other metals. If a bounty could in any caſe be reaſonable, it might perhaps be ſo upon the tranſportation of coals from thoſe parts of the country in which they abound, to thoſe in which they are wanted. But the legiſlature, inſtead of a bounty, has impoſed a tax of three ſhillings and three-pence a ton upon coal carried coaſtways; which upon moſt ſorts of coal is more than ſixty per cent. of the original price at the coal-pit. Coals carried either by land or by inland navigation pay no duty. Where they are naturally cheap, they are conſumed duty free: where they are naturally dear, they are loaded with a heavy duty.

Such taxes, though they raiſe the price of ſubſiſtence, and conſequently the wages of labour, yet they afford a conſiderable revenue to government, which it might not be eaſy to find in any other way. There may, therefore, be good reaſons for continuing them. The bounty upon the exportation of corn, ſo far as it tends in the actual ſtate of tillage to raiſe the price of that neceſſary article, produces all the like bad effects; and inſtead of affording any revenue, frequently occaſions a very great expence to government. The high duties upon the importation of foreign corn, which in years of moderate plenty amount to a prohibition; and the abſolute prohibition of the importation either of live cattle or of ſalt proviſions, which takes place in the ordinary ſtate of the law, and which,

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on account of the ſcarcity, is at preſent ſuſpended for a limited time with regard to Ireland and the Britiſh plantations, have all the bad effects of taxes upon the neceſſaries of life, and produce no revenue to government. Nothing ſeems neceſſary for the repeal of ſuch regulations, but to convince the public of the futility of that ſyſtem in conſequence of which they have been eſtabliſhed.

Taxes upon the neceſſaries of life are much higher in many other countries than in Great Britain. Duties upon flour and meal when ground at the mill, and upon bread when baked at the oven, take place in many countries. In Holland the money price of the bread conſumed in towns is ſuppoſed to be doubled by means of ſuch taxe. In lieu of a part of them, the people who live in the country pay every year ſo much a head, according to the ſort of bread they are ſuppoſed to conſume. Thoſe who conſume wheaten bread, pay three guilders fifteen ſtivers; about ſix ſhillings and ninepence halfpenny. Theſe, and ſome other taxes of the ſame kind, by raiſing the price of labour, are ſaid to have ruined the greater part of the manufactures of Holland *. Similar taxes, though not quite ſo heavy, take place in the Milaneſe, in the ſtates of Genoa, in the dutchy of Modena, in the dutchies of Parma, Placentia, and Guaſtalla, and in the eccleſiaſtical ſtate. A French† author

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tome ii. p. 210, 211.
† Le Reformateur.

of ſome note has propoſed to reform the finances of his country, by ſubſtituting in the room of the greater part of other taxes, this moſt ruinous of all taxes. There is nothing ſo abſurd, ſays Cicero, which has not ſometimes been aſſerted by ſome philoſophers. CHAP. II.

Taxes upon butchers meat are ſtill more common than thoſe upon bread. It may indeed be doubted whether butchers meat is any where a neceſſary of life. Grain and other vegetables, with the help of milk, cheeſe, and butter, or oil, where butter is not to be had, it is known from experience, can, without any butchers meat, afford the moſt plentiful, the moſt wholeſome, the moſt nouriſhing, and the moſt invigorating diet. Decency no where requires that any man ſhould eat butchers meat, as it in moſt places requires that he ſhould wear a linen ſhirt or a pair of leather ſhoes.

Conſumable commodities, whether neceſſaries or luxuries, may be taxed in two different ways. The conſumer may either pay an annual ſum on account of his uſing or conſuming goods of a certain kind; or the goods may be taxed while they remain in the hands of the dealer, and before they are delivered to the conſumer. The conſumable goods which laſt a conſiderable time before they are conſumed altogether, are moſt properly taxed in the one way. Thoſe of which the conſumption is either immediate or more ſpeedy, in the other. The coach-tax and plate-tax are examples of the former method

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of impoſing: the greater part of the other duties of exciſe and cuſtoms, of the latter.

A coach may, with good management, laſt ten or twelve years. It might be taxed, once for all, before it comes out of the hands of the coach-maker. But it is certainly more convenient for the buyer to pay four pounds a year for the privilege of keeping a coach, than to pay all at once forty or forty-eight pounds additional price to the coach-maker; or a ſum equivalent to what the tax is likely to coſt him during the time he uſes the ſame coach. A ſervice of plate, in the ſame manner, may laſt more than a century. It is certainly eaſier for the conſumer to pay five ſhillings a year for every hundred ounces of plate, near one per cent. of the value, than to redeem this long annuity at five and twenty or thirty years purchaſe, which would enhance the price at leaſt five and twenty or thirty per cent. The different taxes which affect houſes are certainly more conveniently paid by moderate annual payments, than by a heavy tax of equal value upon the firſt building or ſale of the houſe.

It was the well-known propoſal of Sir Matthew Decker, that all commodities, even thoſe of which the conſumption is either immediate or very ſpeedy, ſhould be taxed in this manner; the dealer advancing nothing, but the conſumer paying a certain annual ſum for the licence to conſume certain goods. The object of his ſcheme was to promote all the different branches of

of foreign trade, particularly the carrying trade, by taking away all duties upon importation and exportation, and thereby enabling the merchant to employ his whole capital and credit in the purchaſe of goods and the freight of ſhips, no part of either being diverted towards the advancing of taxes. The project, however, of taxing, in this manner, goods of immediate or ſpeedy conſumption, ſeems liable to the four following very important objections. Firſt, the tax would be more unequal, or not ſo well proportioned to the expence and conſumption of the different contributors, as in the way in which it is commonly impoſed. The taxes upon ale, wine, and ſpirituous liquors, which are advanced by the dealers, are finally paid by the different conſumers exactly in proportion to their reſpective conſumption. But if the tax were to be paid by purchaſing a licence to drink thoſe liquors, the ſober would, in proportion to his conſumption, be taxed much more heavily than the drunken conſumer. A family which exerciſed great hoſpitality would be taxed much more lightly than one who entertained fewer gueſts. Secondly, this mode of taxation, by paying for an annual, half-yearly, or quarterly licence to conſume certain goods, would diminiſh very much one of the principal conveniences of taxes upon goods of ſpeedy conſumption; the piece-meal payment. In the price of three-pence halfpenny, which is at preſent paid for a pot of porter, the different taxes upon malt, hops, and beer, together with the extraordinary profit which the

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brewer charges for having advanced them, may perhaps amount to about three halfpence. If a workman can conveniently ſpare thoſe three halfpence, he buys a pot of porter. If he cannot, he contents himſelf with a pint, and, as a penny ſaved is a penny got, he thus gains a farthing by his temperance. He pays the tax piecemeal, as he can afford to pay it, and when he can afford to pay it; and every act of payment is perfectly voluntary, and what he can avoid if he chuſes to do ſo. Thirdly, ſuch taxes would operate leſs as ſumptuary laws. When the licence was once purchaſed, whether the purchaſer drunk much or drunk little, his tax would be the ſame. Fourthly, if a workman were to pay all at once, by yearly, half-yearly, or quarterly payments, a tax equal to what he at preſent pays, with little or no inconveniency, upon all the different pots and pints of porter which he drinks in any ſuch period of time, the ſum might frequently diſtreſs him very much. This mode of taxation, therefore, it ſeems evident, could never, without the moſt grievous oppreſſion, produce a revenue nearly equal to what is derived from the preſent mode without any oppreſſion. In ſeveral countries, however, commodities of an immediate or very ſpeedy conſumption are taxed in this manner. In Holland, people pay ſo much a head for a licence to drink tea. I have already mentioned a tax upon bread, which, ſo far as it is conſumed in farmhouſes and country villages, is there levied in the ſame manner.

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The duties of excise are imposed chiefly upon goods of home produce destined for home consumption. They are imposed only upon a few sorts of goods of the most general use. There can never be any doubt either concerning the goods which are subject to those duties, or concerning the particular duty which each species of goods is subject to. They fall almost altogether upon what I call luxuries, excepting always the four duties above mentioned, upon salt, soap, leather, candles, and, perhaps, that upon green glass.

The duties of customs are much more ancient than those of excise. They seem to have been called customs, as denoting customary payments which had been in use from time immemorial. They appear to have been originally considered as taxes upon the profits of merchants. During the barbarous times of feudal anarchy, merchants, like all the other inhabitants of burghs, were considered as little better than emancipated bondmen, whose persons were despised, and whose gains were envied. The great nobility, who had consented that the king should tallage the profits of their own tenants, were not unwilling that he should tallage likewise those of an order of men whom it was much less their interest to protect. In those ignorant times, it was not understood, that the profits of merchants are a subject not taxable directly; or that the final payment of all such taxes must fall, with a considerable over-charge, upon the consumers.

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The gains of alien merchants were looked upon more unfavourably than thoſe of Engliſh merchants. It was natural, therefore, that thoſe of the former ſhould be taxed more heavily than thoſe of the latter. This diſtinction between the duties upon aliens and thoſe upon Engliſh merchants, which was begun from ignorance, has been continued from the ſpirit of monopoly, or in order to give our own merchants an advantage both in the home and in the foreign market.

With this diſtinction, the ancient duties of cuſtoms were impoſed equally upon all ſorts of goods, neceſſaries as well as luxuries, goods exported as well as goods imported. Why ſhould the dealers in one ſort of goods, it ſeems to have been thought, be more favoured than thoſe in another? or why ſhould the merchant exporter be more favoured than the merchant importer?

The ancient cuſtoms were divided into three branches. The firſt, and perhaps the moſt ancient of all thoſe duties, was that upon wool and leather. It ſeems to have been chiefly or altogether an exportation duty. When the woollen manufacture came to be eſtabliſhed in England, leſt the King ſhould loſe any part of his cuſtoms upon wool by the exportation of woollen cloths, a like duty was impoſed upon them. The other two branches were, firſt, a duty upon wine, which, being impoſed at ſo much a ton, was called a tonnage; and, ſecondly, a duty upon all other goods, which, being impoſed at ſo much

much a pound of their ſuppoſed value, was called a poundage. In the forty-ſeventh year of Edward III. a duty of ſixpence in the pound was impoſed upon all goods exported and imported, except wools, wool-fells, leather, and wines, which were ſubject to particular duties. In the fourteenth of Richard II. this duty was raiſed to one ſhilling in the pound; but three years afterwards, it was again reduced to ſixpence. It was raiſed to eight-pence in the ſecond year of Henry IV.; and in the fourth year of the ſame prince, to one ſhilling. From this time to the ninth year of William III. this duty continued at one ſhilling in the pound. The duties of tonnage and poundage were generally granted to the King by one and the ſame act of parliament, and were called the Subſidy of Tonnage and Poundage. The ſubſidy of poundage having continued for ſo long a time at one ſhilling in the pound, or at five per cent.; a ſubſidy came, in the language of the cuſtoms, to denote a general duty of this kind of five per cent. This ſubſidy, which is now called the Old Subſidy, ſtill continues to be levied according to the book of rates, eſtabliſhed in the twelfth of Charles II. The method of aſcertaining, by a book of rates, the value of goods ſubject to this duty, is ſaid to be older than the time of James I. The new ſubſidy impoſed by the ninth and tenth of William III., was an additional five per cent. upon the greater part of goods. The one-third and the two-third ſubſidy made up between them another five per cent.

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cent. of which they were proportionable parts. The ſubſidy of 1747 made a fourth five per cent. upon the greater part of goods; and that of 1759, a fifth upon ſome particular ſorts of goods. Beſides thoſe five ſubſidies, a great variety of other duties have occaſionally been impoſed upon particular ſorts of goods, in order ſometimes to relieve the exigencies of the ſtate, and ſometimes to regulate the trade of the country, according to the principles of the mercantile ſyſtem.

That ſyſtem has come gradually more and more into faſhion. The old ſubſidy was impoſed indifferently upon exportation as well as importation. The four ſubſequent ſubſidies, as well as the other duties which have ſince been occaſionally impoſed upon particular ſorts of goods, have, with a few exceptions, been laid altogether upon importation. The greater part of the ancient duties which had been impoſed upon the exportation of the goods of home produce and manufacture, have either been lightened or taken away altogether. In moſt caſes they have been taken away. Bounties have even been given upon the exportation of ſome of them. Drawbacks too, ſometimes of the whole, and, in moſt caſes, of a part of the duties which are paid upon the importation of foreign goods, have been granted upon their exportation. Only half the duties impoſed by the old ſubſidy upon importation are drawn back upon exportation: but the whole of thoſe impoſed by the latter ſubſidies and other impoſts are, upon the

the greater part of goods, drawn back in the ſame manner. This growing favour of exportation, and diſcouragement of importation, have ſuffered only a few exceptions, which chiefly concern the materials of ſome manufactures. Theſe, our merchants and manufacturers are willing ſhould come as cheap as poſſible to themſelves, and as dear as poſſible to their rivals and competitors in other countries. Foreign materials are, upon this account, ſometimes allowed to be imported duty free; Spaniſh wool, for example, flax, and raw linen yarn. The exportation of the materials of home produce, and of thoſe which are the particular produce of our colonies, has ſometimes been prohibited, and ſometimes ſubjected to higher duties. The exportation of Engliſh wool has been prohibited. That of beaver ſkins, of beaver wool, and of gum Senega, has been ſubjected to higher duties; Great Britain, by the conqueſt of Canada and Senegal, having got almoſt the monopoly of thoſe commodities.

That the mercantile ſyſtem has not been very favourable to the revenue of the great body of the people, to the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, I have endeavoured to ſhew in the fourth book of this Inquiry. It ſeems not to have been more favourable to the revenue of the ſovereign; ſo far at leaſt as that revenue depends upon the duties of cuſtoms.

In conſequence of that ſyſtem, the importation of ſeveral ſorts of goods has been prohibited altogether. This prohibition has in ſome caſes

entirely

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entirely prevented, and in others has very much diminiſhed the importation of thoſe commodities, by reducing the importers to the neceſſity of ſmuggling. It has entirely prevented the importation of foreign woollens; and it has very much diminiſhed that of foreign ſilks and velvets. In both caſes it has entirely annihilated the revenue of cuſtoms which might have been levied upon ſuch importation.

The high duties which have been impoſed upon the importation of many different ſorts of foreign goods, in order to diſcourage their conſumption in Great Britain, have in many caſes ſerved only to encourage ſmuggling; and in all caſes have reduced the revenue of the cuſtoms below what more moderate duties would have afforded. The ſaying of Dr. Swift, that in the arithmetic of the cuſtoms two and two, inſtead of making four, make ſometimes only one, holds perfectly true with regard to ſuch heavy duties, which never could have been impoſed, had not the mercantile ſyſtem taught us, in many caſes, to employ taxation as an inſtrument, not of revenue, but of monopoly.

The bounties which are ſometimes given upon the exportation of home produce and manufactures, and the drawbacks which are paid upon the re-exportation of the greater part of foreign goods, have given occaſion to many frauds, and to a ſpecies of ſmuggling more deſtructive of the public revenue than any other. In order to obtain the bounty or drawback, the goods, it is well known, are ſometimes

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ſhipped and ſent to ſea; but ſoon afterwards clandeſtinely relanded in ſome other part of the country. The defalcation of the revenue of cuſtoms occaſioned by bounties and drawbacks, of which a great part are obtained fraudulently, is very great. The groſs produce of the cuſtoms in the year which ended on the 5th of January 1755, amounted to 5,068,000 *l.* The bounties which were paid out of this revenue, though in that year there was no bounty upon corn, amounted to 167,800 *l.* The drawbacks which were paid upon debentures and certificates, to 2,156,800 *l.* Bounties and drawbacks together, amounted to 2,324,600 *l.* In conſequence of theſe deductions the revenue of the cuſtoms amounted only to 2,743,400 *l.*: from which, deducting 287,900 *l.* for the expence of management in ſalaries and other incidents, the neat revenue of the cuſtoms for that year comes out to be 2,455,500 *l.* The expence of management amounts in this manner to between five and ſix per cent. upon the groſs revenue of the cuſtoms, and to ſomething more than ten per cent. upon what remains of that revenue, after deducting what is paid away in bounties and drawbacks.

Heavy duties being impoſed upon almoſt all goods imported, our merchant importers ſmuggle as much, and make entry of as little as they can. Our merchant exporters, on the contrary, make entry of more than they export; ſometimes out of vanity, and to paſs for great dealers in goods which pay no duty; and ſometimes to gain a

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bounty or a drawback. Our exports, in conſequence of theſe different frauds, appear upon the cuſtomhouſe books greatly to overbalance our imports; to the unſpeakable comfort of thoſe politicians who meaſure the national proſperity by what they call the balance of trade.

All goods imported, unleſs particularly exempted, and ſuch exemptions are not very numerous, are liable to ſome duties of cuſtoms. If any goods are imported not mentioned in the book of rates, they are taxed at 4*s.* 9$\frac{3}{4}$*d.* for every twenty ſhillings value, according to the oath of the importer, that is, nearly at five ſubſidies, or five poundage duties. The book of rates is extremely comprehenſive, and enumerates a great variety of articles, many of them little uſed, and therefore not well known. It is upon this account frequently uncertain under what article a particular ſort of goods ought to be claſſed, and conſequently what duty they ought to pay. Miſtakes with regard to this ſometimes ruin the cuſtomhouſe officer, and frequently occaſion much trouble, expence, and vexation to the importer. In point of perſpicuity, preciſion, and diſtinctneſs, therefore, the duties of cuſtoms are much inferior to thoſe of exciſe.

In order that the greater part of the members of any ſociety ſhould contribute to the public revenue in proportion to their reſpective expence, it does not ſeem neceſſary that every ſingle article of that expence ſhould be taxed. The revenue, which is levied by the duties of exciſe,

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is ſuppoſed to fall as equally upon the contributors as that which is levied by the duties of cuſtoms; and the duties of exciſe are impoſed upon a few articles only of the moſt general uſe and conſumption. It has been the opinion of many people, that, by proper management, the duties of cuſtoms might likewiſe, without any loſs to the public revenue, and with great advantage to foreign trade, be confined to a few articles only.

The foreign articles, of the moſt general uſe and conſumption in Great Britain, ſeem at preſent to conſiſt chiefly in foreign wines and brandies; in ſome of the productions of America and the Weſt Indies, ſugar, rum, tobacco, cocoa-nuts, &c. and in ſome of thoſe of the Eaſt Indies, tea, coffee, china-ware, ſpiceries of all kinds, ſeveral ſorts of piece-goods, &c. Theſe different articles afford, perhaps, at preſent, the greater part of the revenue which is drawn from the duties of cuſtoms. The taxes which at preſent ſubſiſt upon foreign manufactures, if you except thoſe upon the few contained in the foregoing enumeration, have the greater part of them been impoſed for the purpoſe, not of revenue, but of monopoly, or to give our own merchants an advantage in the home market. By removing all prohibitions, and by ſubjecting all foreign manufactures to ſuch moderate taxes, as it was found from experience afforded upon each article the greateſt revenue to the public, our own workmen might ſtill have a conſiderable advantage in the home market, and many

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articles, ſome of which at preſent afford no revenue to government, and others a very inconſiderable one, might afford a very great one.

High taxes, ſometimes by diminiſhing the conſumption of the taxed commodities, and ſometimes by encouraging ſmuggling, frequently afford a ſmaller revenue to government than what might be drawn from more moderate taxes.

When the diminution of revenue is the effect of the diminution of conſumption, there can be but one remedy, and that is the lowering of the tax.

When the diminution of the revenue is the effect of the encouragement given to ſmuggling, it may perhaps be remedied in two ways; either by diminiſhing the temptation to ſmuggle, or by increaſing the difficulty of ſmuggling. The temptation to ſmuggle can be diminiſhed only by the lowering of the tax; and the difficulty of ſmuggling can be increaſed only by eſtabliſhing that ſyſtem of adminiſtration which is moſt proper for preventing it.

The exciſe laws, it appears, I believe, from experience, obſtruct and embarraſs the operations of the ſmuggler much more effectually than thoſe of the cuſtoms. By introducing into the cuſtoms a ſyſtem of adminiſtration as ſimilar to that of the exciſe as the nature of the different duties will admit, the difficulty of ſmuggling might be very much increaſed. This alteration, it has been ſuppoſed by many people, might very eaſily be brought about.

The

The importer of commodities liable to any duties of cuſtoms, it has been ſaid, might at his option be allowed either to carry them to his own private warehouſe, or to lodge them in a warehouſe provided either at his own expence or at that of the public, but under the key of the cuſtomhouſe officer, and never to be opened but in his preſence. If the merchant carried them to his own private warehouſe, the duties to be immediately paid, and never afterwards to be drawn back; and that warehouſe to be at all times ſubject to the viſit and examination of the cuſtomhouſe officer, in order to aſcertain how far the quantity contained in it correſponded with that for which the duty had been paid. If he carried them to the public warehouſe, no duty to be paid till they were taken out for home conſumption. If taken out for exportation, to be duty-free; proper ſecurity being always given that they ſhould be ſo exported. The dealers in thoſe particular commodities, either by wholeſale or retail, to be at all times ſubject to the viſit and examination of the cuſtomhouſe officer; and to be obliged to juſtify by proper certificates the payment of the duty upon the whole quantity contained in their ſhops or warehouſes. What are called the exciſe-duties upon rum imported are at preſent levied in this manner, and the ſame ſyſtem of adminiſtration might perhaps be extended to all duties upon goods imported; provided always that thoſe duties were, like the duties of exciſe, confined to a few ſorts of goods of the moſt general uſe and con-

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ſumption. If they were extended to almoſt all ſorts of goods, as at preſent, public warehouſes of ſufficient extent could not eaſily be provided, and goods of a very delicate nature, or of which the preſervation required much care and attention, could not ſafely be truſted by the merchant in any warehouſe but his own.

If by ſuch a ſyſtem of adminiſtration ſmuggling, to any conſiderable extent, could be prevented even under pretty high duties; and if every duty was occaſionally either heightened or lowered according as it was moſt likely, either the one way or the other, to afford the greateſt revenue to the ſtate; taxation being always employed as an inſtrument of revenue and never of monopoly; it ſeems not improbable that a revenue, at leaſt equal to the preſent neat revenue of the cuſtoms, might be drawn from duties upon the importation of only a few ſorts of goods of the moſt general uſe and conſumption; and that the duties of cuſtoms might thus be brought to the ſame degree of ſimplicity, certainty, and preciſion, as thoſe of exciſe. What the revenue at preſent loſes, by drawbacks upon the re-exportation of foreign goods which are afterwards relanded and conſumed at home, would under this ſyſtem be ſaved altogether. If to this ſaving, which would alone be very conſiderable, were added the abolition of all bounties upon the exportation of home-produce; in all caſes in which thoſe bounties were not in reality drawbacks of ſome duties of exciſe which had before been advanced; it cannot well be doubted but that the neat revenue

of cuſtoms might, after an alteration of this kind, be fully equal to what it had ever been before. CHAP. II.

If by ſuch a change of ſyſtem the public revenue ſuffered no loſs, the trade and manufactures of the country would certainly gain a very conſiderable advantage. The trade in the commodities not taxed, by far the greateſt number, would be perfectly free, and might be carried on to and from all parts of the world with every poſſible advantage. Among thoſe commodities would be comprehended all the neceſſaries of life, and all the materials of manufacture. So far as the free importation of the neceſſaries of life reduced their average money price in the home market, it would reduce the money price of labour, but without reducing in any reſpect its real recompence. The value of money is in proportion to the quantity of the neceſſaries of life which it will purchaſe. That of the neceſſaries of life is altogether independent of the quantity of money which can be had for them. The reduction in the money price of labour would neceſſarily be attended with a proportionable one in that of all home-manufactures, which would thereby gain ſome advantage in all foreign markets. The price of ſome manufactures would be reduced in a ſtill greater proportion by the free importation of the raw materials. If raw ſilk could be imported from China and Indoſtan duty-free, the ſilk manufacturers in England could greatly underſell thoſe of both France and Italy. There would be no occaſion to prohibit the importation of foreign ſilks and velvets. The cheapneſs

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of their goods would ſecure to our own workmen, not only the poſſeſſion of the home, but a very great command of the foreign market. Even the trade in the commodities taxed would be carried on with much more advantage than at preſent. If thoſe commodities were delivered out of the public warehouſe for foreign exportation, being in this caſe exempted from all taxes, the trade in them would be perfectly free. The carrying trade in all ſorts of goods would under this ſyſtem enjoy every poſſible advantage. If thoſe commodities were delivered out for home-conſumption, the importer not being obliged to advance the tax till he had an opportunity of ſelling his goods, either to ſome dealer, or to ſome conſumer, he could always afford to ſell them cheaper than if he had been obliged to advance it at the moment of importation. Under the ſame taxes, the foreign trade of conſumption even in the taxed commodities, might in this manner be carried on with much more advantage than it can at preſent.

It was the object of the famous exciſe ſcheme of Sir Robert Walpole to eſtabliſh, with regard to wine and tobacco, a ſyſtem not very unlike that which is here propoſed. But though the bill which was then brought into parliament, comprehended thoſe two commodities only; it was generally ſuppoſed to be meant as an introduction to a more extenſive ſcheme of the ſame kind. Faction, combined with the intereſt of ſmuggling merchants, raiſed ſo violent, though ſo unjuſt, a clamour againſt that bill, that the miniſter

miniſter thought proper to drop it; and from a dread of exciting a clamour of the ſame kind, none of his ſucceſſors have dared to reſume the project.

The duties upon foreign luxuries imported for home-conſumption, though they ſometimes fall upon the poor, fall principally upon people of middling or more than middling fortune. Such are, for example, the duties upon foreign wines, upon coffee, chocolate, tea, ſugar, &c.

The duties upon the cheaper luxuries of home-produce deſtined for home-conſumption, fall pretty equally upon people of all ranks in proportion to their reſpective expence. The poor pay the duties upon malt, hops, beer, and ale, upon their own conſumption: The rich, upon both their own conſumption and that of their ſervants.

The whole conſumption of the inferior ranks of people, or of thoſe below the middling rank, it muſt be obſerved, is in every country much greater, not only in quantity, but in value, than that of the middling and of thoſe above the middling rank. The whole expence of the inferior is much greater than that of the ſuperior ranks. In the firſt place, almoſt the whole capital of every country is annually diſtributed among the inferior ranks of people, as the wages of productive labour. Secondly, a great part of the revenue ariſing from both the rent of land and the profits of ſtock, is annually diſtributed among the ſame rank, in the wages and maintenance of menial ſervants, and other unproductive labourers. Thirdly, ſome part of the profits

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of ſtock belongs to the ſame rank, as a revenue ariſing from the employment of their ſmall capitals. The amount of the profits annually made by ſmall ſhopkeepers, tradeſmen, and retailers of all kinds, is every where very conſiderable, and makes a very conſiderable portion of the annual produce. Fourthly, and laſtly, ſome part even of the rent of land belongs to the ſame rank; a conſiderable part to thoſe who are ſomewhat below the middling rank, and a ſmall part even to the loweſt rank; common labourers ſometimes poſſeſſing in property an acre or two of land. Though the expence of thoſe inferior ranks of people, therefore, taking them individually, is very ſmall, yet the whole maſs of it, taking them collectively, amounts always to by much the largeſt portion of the whole expence of the ſociety; what remains, of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country for the conſumption of the ſuperior ranks, being always much leſs, not only in quantity but in value. The taxes upon expence, therefore, which fall chiefly upon that of the ſuperior ranks of people, upon the ſmaller portion of the annual produce, are likely to be much leſs productive than either thoſe which fall indifferently upon the expence of all ranks, or even thoſe which fall chiefly upon that of the inferior ranks; than either thoſe which fall indifferently upon the whole annual produce, or thoſe which fall chiefly upon the larger portion of it. The exciſe upon the materials and manufacture of home-made fermented and ſpirituous liquors is accordingly, of

of all the different taxes upon expence, by far the moſt productive; and this branch of the exciſe falls very much, perhaps principally, upon the expence of the common people. In the year which ended on the 5th of July 1775, the groſs produce of this branch of the exciſe amounted to 3,341,837*l.* 9*s.* 9*d.*

It muſt always be remembered, however, that it is the luxurious and not the neceſſary expence of the inferior ranks of people that ought ever to be taxed. The final payment of any tax upon their neceſſary expence would fall altogether upon the ſuperior ranks of people; upon the ſmaller portion of the annual produce, and not upon the greater. Such a tax muſt in all caſes either raiſe the wages of labour, or leſſen the demand for it. It could not raiſe the wages of labour, without throwing the final payment of the tax upon the ſuperior ranks of people. It could not leſſen the demand for labour, without leſſening the annual produce of the land and labour of the country, the fund from which all taxes muſt be finally paid. Whatever might be the ſtate to which a tax of this kind reduced the demand for labour, it muſt always raiſe wages higher than they otherwiſe would be in that ſtate; and the final payment of this enhancement of wages muſt in all caſes fall upon the ſuperior ranks of people.

Fermented liquors brewed, and ſpirituous liquors diſtilled, not for ſale, but for private uſe, are not in Great Britain liable to any duties of exciſe. This exemption, of which the object is to ſave private families from the odious viſit and examination

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examination of the tax-gatherer, occaſions the burden of thoſe duties to fall frequently much lighter upon the rich than upon the poor. It is not, indeed, very common to diſtil for private uſe, though it is done ſometimes. But in the country, many middling and almoſt all rich and great families brew their own beer. Their ſtrong beer, therefore, coſts them eight ſhillings a barrel leſs than it coſts the common brewer, who muſt have his profit upon the tax, as well as upon all the other expence which he advances. Such families, therefore, muſt drink their beer at leaſt nine or ten ſhillings a barrel cheaper than any liquor of the ſame quality can be drunk by the common people, to whom it is every where more convenient to buy their beer, by little and little, from the brewery or the alehouſe. Malt, in the ſame manner, that is made for the uſe of a private family, is not liable to the viſit or examination of the tax-gather; but in this caſe the family muſt compound at ſeven ſhillings and ſixpence a head for the tax. Seven ſhillings and ſixpence are equal to the exciſe upon ten buſhels of malt; a quantity fully equal to what all the different members of any ſober family, men, women, and children, are at an average likely to conſume. But in rich and great families, where country hoſpitality is much practiſed, the malt liquors conſumed by the members of the family make but a ſmall part of the conſumption of the houſe. Either on account of this compoſition, however, or for other reaſons, it is not near ſo common to malt as to brew for private uſe. It is difficult to imagine any equitable reaſon

reaſon why thoſe who either brew or diſtil for private uſe, ſhould not be ſubject to a compoſition of the ſame kind.

A greater revenue than what is at preſent drawn from all the heavy taxes upon malt, beer, and ale, might be raiſed, it has frequently been ſaid, by a much lighter tax upon malt; the opportunities of defrauding the revenue being much greater in a brewery than in a malt-houſe; and thoſe who brew for private uſe being exempted from all duties or compoſition for duties, which is not the caſe with thoſe who malt for private uſe.

In the porter brewery of London, a quarter of malt is commonly brewed into more than two barrels and a half, ſometimes into three barrels of porter. The different taxes upon malt amount to ſix ſhillings a quarter; thoſe upon ſtrong beer and ale to eight ſhillings a barrel. In the porter brewery, therefore, the different taxes upon malt, beer, and ale, amount to between twenty-ſix and thirty ſhillings upon the produce of a quarter of malt. In the country brewery for common country ſale, a quarter of malt is ſeldom brewed into leſs than two barrels of ſtrong and one barrel of ſmall beer; frequently into two barrels and a half of ſtrong beer. The different taxes upon ſmall beer amount to one ſhilling and four-pence a barrel. In the country brewery, therefore, the different taxes upon malt, beer, and ale, ſeldom amount to leſs than twenty-three ſhillings and four-pence, frequently to twenty-ſix ſhillings, upon the produce of a quarter of malt. Taking the whole kingdom at an average, therefore, the whole amount of the duties upon malt, beer,

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and ale, cannot be eſtimated at leſs than twenty-four or twenty-five ſhillings upon the produce of a quarter of malt. But by taking off all the different duties upon beer and ale, and by tripling the malt-tax, or by raiſing it from ſix to eighteen ſhillings upon the quarter of malt, a greater revenue, it is ſaid, might be raiſed by this ſingle tax than what is at preſent drawn from all thoſe heavier taxes.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
In 1772, the old malt-tax produced	722,023	11	11
The additional	356,776	7	$9\frac{3}{4}$
In 1773, the old tax produced	561,627	3	$7\frac{1}{2}$
The additional	278,650	15	$3\frac{3}{4}$
In 1774, the old tax produced	624,614	17	$5\frac{1}{4}$
The additional	310,745	2	$8\frac{1}{2}$
In 1775, the old tax produced	657,357	0	$8\frac{1}{4}$
The additional	323,785	12	$6\frac{1}{4}$
4)	3,835,580	12	$0\frac{3}{4}$
Average of theſe four years	958,895	3	$1\frac{3}{16}$
In 1772, the country exciſe produced	1,243,128	5	3
The London brewery	408,260	7	$2\frac{3}{4}$
In 1773, the country exciſe	1,245,808	3	3
The London brewery	405,406	17	$10\frac{1}{2}$
In 1774, the country exciſe	1,246,373	14	$5\frac{1}{2}$
The London brewery	320,601	18	$0\frac{1}{4}$
In 1775, the country exciſe	1,214,583	6	1
The London brewery	463,670	7	$0\frac{1}{4}$
4)	6,547,832	19	$2\frac{1}{4}$
Average of theſe four years	1,636,958	4	$9\frac{1}{2}$
To which adding the average malt tax, or	958,895	3	$0\frac{3}{16}$
The whole amount of thoſe different taxes comes out to be	2,595,853	7	$9\frac{11}{16}$
But by tripling the malt tax, or by raiſing it from ſix to eighteen ſhillings upon the quarter of malt, that ſingle tax would produce	2,876,685	9	$0\frac{9}{16}$
A ſum which exceeds the foregoing by	280,832	1	$2\frac{14}{16}$

Under

Under the old malt tax, indeed, is comprehended a tax of four ſhillings upon the hogſhead of cyder, and another of ten ſhillings upon the barrel of mum. In 1774, the tax upon cyder produced only 3,083*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* It probably fell ſomewhat ſhort of its uſual amount; all the different taxes upon cyder having, that year, produced leſs than ordinary. The tax upon mum, though much heavier, is ſtill leſs productive, on account of the ſmaller conſumption of that liquor. But to balance whatever may be the ordinary amount of thoſe two taxes, there is comprehended under what is called the country exciſe, firſt, the old exciſe of ſix ſhillings and eight-pence upon the hogſhead of cyder; ſecondly, a like tax of ſix ſhillings and eight-pence upon the hogſhead of verjuice; thirdly, another of eight ſhillings and nine-pence upon the hogſhead of vinegar; and, laſtly, a fourth tax of eleven-pence upon the gallon of mead or metheglin: the produce of thoſe different taxes will probably much more than counterbalance that of the duties impoſed, by what is called the annual malt tax upon cyder and mum.

Malt is conſumed not only in the brewery of beer and ale, but in the manufacture of low wines and ſpirits. If the malt tax were to be raiſed to eighteen ſhillings upon the quarter, it might be neceſſary to make ſome abatement in the different exciſes which are impoſed upon thoſe particular ſorts of low wines and ſpirits of which malt makes any part of the materials. In what are called malt ſpirits, it makes commonly but

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but a third part of the materials; the other two-thirds being either raw barley, or one-third barley and one-third wheat. In the diſtillery of malt ſpirits, both the opportunity and the temptation to ſmuggle, are much greater than either in a brewery or in a malt-houſe; the opportunity, on account of the ſmaller bulk and greater value of the commodity; and the temptation, on account of the ſuperior height of the duties, which amount to 3*s.* $10\frac{2}{3}$*d.** upon the gallon of ſpirits. By increaſing the duties upon malt, and reducing thoſe upon the diſtillery, both the opportunities and the temptation to ſmuggle would be diminiſhed, which might occaſion a ſtill further augmentation of revenue.

It has for ſome time paſt been the policy of Great Britain to diſcourage the conſumption of ſpirituous liquors, on account of their ſuppoſed tendency to ruin the health and to corrupt the morals of the common people. According to this policy, the abatement of the taxes upon the diſtillery ought not to be ſo great as to reduce, in any reſpect, the price of thoſe liquors. Spirituous liquors might remain as dear as ever; while at the ſame time the wholeſome and invigorating liquors of beer and ale might be conſiderably reduced in their price. The people might thus be in part relieved from one of the

* Though the duties directly impoſed upon proof ſpirits amount only to 2*s.* 6*d.* per gallon, theſe added to the duties upon the low wines, from which they are diſtilled, amount to 3*s.* $10\frac{2}{3}$*d.* Both low wines and proof ſpirits are, to prevent frauds, now rated according to what they guage in the waſh.

burdens of which they at preſent complain the moſt; while at the ſame time the revenue might be conſiderably augmented.

The objections of Dr. Davenant to this alteration in the preſent ſyſtem of exciſe duties, ſeem to be without foundation. Thoſe objections are, that the tax, inſtead of dividing itſelf as at preſent pretty equally upon the profit of the maltſter, upon that of the brewer, and upon that of the retailer, would, ſo far as it affected profit, fall altogether upon that of the maltſter; that the maltſter could not ſo eaſily get back the amount of the tax in the advanced price of his malt, as the brewer and retailer in the advanced price of their liquor; and that ſo heavy a tax upon malt might reduce the rent and profit of barley land.

No tax can ever reduce, for any conſiderable time, the rate of profit in any particular trade, which muſt always keep its level with other trades in the neighbourhood. The preſent duties upon malt, beer, and ale, do not affect the profits of the dealers in thoſe commodities, who all get back the tax with an additional profit, in the enhanced price of their goods. A tax indeed may render the goods upon which it is impoſed ſo dear as to diminiſh the conſumption of them. But the conſumption of malt is in malt liquors; and a tax of eighteen ſhillings upon the quarter of malt could not well render thoſe liquors dearer than the different taxes, amounting to twenty-four or twenty-five ſhillings, do at preſent. Thoſe liquors, on the contrary, would probably become cheaper, and the conſumption of

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of them would be more likely to increaſe than to diminiſh.

It is not very eaſy to underſtand why it ſhould be more difficult for the maltſter to get back eighteen ſhillings in the advanced price of his malt, than it is at preſent for the brewer to get back twenty-four or twenty-five, ſometimes thirty ſhillings, in that of his liquor. The maltſter, indeed, inſtead of a tax of ſix ſhillings, would be obliged to advance one of eighteen ſhillings upon every quarter of malt. But the brewer is at preſent obliged to advance a tax of twenty-four or twenty-five, ſometimes thirty ſhillings, upon every quarter of malt which he brews. It could not be more inconvenient for the maltſter to advance a lighter tax, than it is at preſent for the brewer to advance a heavier one. The maltſter doth not always keep in his granaries a ſtock of malt which it will require a longer time to diſpoſe of, than the ſtock of beer and ale which the brewer frequently keeps in his cellars. The former, therefore, may frequently get the returns of his money as ſoon as the latter. But whatever inconveniency might ariſe to the maltſter from being obliged to advance a heavier tax, it could eaſily be remedied by granting him a few months longer credit than is at preſent commonly given to the brewer.

Nothing could reduce the rent and profit of barley land which did not reduce the demand for barley. But a change of ſyſtem, which reduced the duties upon a quarter of malt brewed into beer and ale from twenty-four and twenty-five ſhillings to eighteen ſhillings, would be more

more likely to increaſe than diminiſh that demand. The rent and profit of barley land, beſides, muſt always be nearly equal to thoſe of other equally fertile and equally well cultivated land. If they were leſs, ſome part of the barley land would ſoon be turned to ſome other purpoſe; and if they were greater, more land would ſoon be turned to the raiſing of barley. When the ordinary price of any particular produce of land is at what may be called a monopoly price, a tax upon it neceſſarily reduces the rent and profit of the land which grows it. A tax upon the produce of thoſe precious vineyards, of which the wine falls ſo much ſhort of the effectual demand, that its price is always above the natural proportion to that of the produce of other equally fertile and equally well cultivated land, would neceſſarily reduce the rent and profit of thoſe vineyards. The price of the wines being already the higheſt that could be got for the quantity commonly ſent to market, it could not be raiſed higher without diminiſhing that quantity; and the quantity could not be diminiſhed without ſtill greater loſs, becauſe the lands could not be turned to any other equally valuable produce. The whole weight of the tax, therefore, would fall upon the rent and profit; properly upon the rent of the vineyard. When it has been propoſed to lay any new tax upon ſugar, our ſugar planters have frequently complained that the whole weight of ſuch taxes fell, not upon the conſumer, but upon the producer; they never having been able to

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raiſe the price of their ſugar after the tax, higher than it was before. The price had, it ſeems, before the tax been a monopoly price; and the argument adduced to ſhew that ſugar was an improper ſubject of taxation, demonſtrated, perhaps, that it was a proper one; the gains of monopoliſts, whenever they can be come at, being certainly of all ſubjects the moſt proper. But the ordinary price of barley has never been a monopoly price; and the rent and profit of barley land have never been above their natural proportion to thoſe of other equally fertile and equally well cultivated land. The different taxes which have been impoſed upon malt, beer, and ale, have never lowered the price of barley; have never reduced the rent and profit of barley land. The price of malt to the brewer has conſtantly riſen in proportion to the taxes impoſed upon it; and thoſe taxes, together with the different duties upon beer and ale, have conſtantly either raiſed the price, or what comes to the ſame thing, reduced the quality of thoſe commodities to the conſumer. The final payment of thoſe taxes has fallen conſtantly upon the conſumer, and not upon the producer.

The only people likely to ſuffer by the change of ſyſtem here propoſed, are thoſe who brew for their own private uſe. But the exemption, which this ſuperior rank of people at preſent enjoy, from very heavy taxes which are paid by the poor labourer and artificer, is ſurely moſt unjuſt and unequal, and ought to be taken away, even

even though this change was never to take place. It has probably been the intereſt of this ſuperior order of people, however, which has hitherto prevented a change of ſyſtem that could not well fail both to increaſe the revenue and to relieve the people. CHAP. II.

Beſides ſuch duties as thoſe of cuſtoms and exciſe above-mentioned, there are ſeveral others which affect the price of goods more unequally and more indirectly. Of this kind are the duties which in French are called Péages, which in old Saxon times were called Duties of Paſſage, and which ſeem to have been originally eſtabliſhed for the ſame purpoſe as our turnpike tolls, or the tolls upon our canals and navigable rivers, for the maintenance of the road or of the navigation. Thoſe duties, when applied to ſuch purpoſes, are moſt properly impoſed according to the bulk or weight of the goods. As they were originally local and provincial duties, applicable to local and provincial purpoſes, the adminiſtration of them was in moſt caſes entruſted to the particular town, pariſh, or lordſhip, in which they were levied; ſuch communities being in ſome way or other ſuppoſed to be accountable for the application. The ſovereign, who is altogether unaccountable, has in many countries aſſumed to himſelf the adminiſtration of thoſe duties; and though he has in moſt caſes enhanced very much the duty, he has in many entirely neglected the application. If the turnpike tolls of Great Britain ſhould ever become one of the reſources of government, we may

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learn, by the example of many other nations, what would probably be the conſequence. Such tolls are no doubt finally paid by the conſumer; but the conſumer is not taxed in proportion to his expence when he pays, not according to the value, but according to the bulk or weight of what he conſumes. When ſuch duties are impoſed, not according to the bulk or weight, but according to the ſuppoſed value of the goods, they become properly a ſort of inland cuſtoms or exciſes, which obſtruct very much the moſt important of all branches of commerce, the interior commerce of the country.

In ſome ſmall ſtates duties ſimilar to thoſe paſſage duties are impoſed upon goods carried acroſs the territory, either by land or by water, from one foreign country to another. Theſe are in ſome countries called tranſit-duties. Some of the little Italian ſtates, which are ſituated upon the Po, and the rivers which run into it, derive ſome revenue from duties of this kind, which are paid altogether by foreigners, and which, perhaps, are the only duties that one ſtate can impoſe upon the ſubjects of another, without obſtructing in any reſpect the induſtry or commerce of its own. The moſt important tranſit-duty in the world is that levied by the King of Denmark upon all merchant ſhips which paſs through the Sound.

Such taxes upon luxuries as the greater part of the duties of cuſtoms and exciſe, though they all fall indifferently upon every different ſpecies of revenue, and are paid finally, or without any

retribution, by whoever conſumes the commodities upon which they are impoſed, yet they do not always fall equally or proportionably upon the revenue of every individual. As every man's humour regulates the degree of his conſumption, every man contributes rather according to his humour than in proportion to his revenue; the profuſe contribute more, the parſimonious leſs, than their proper proportion. During the minority of a man of great fortune, he contributes commonly very little, by his conſumption, towards the ſupport of that ſtate from whoſe protection he derives a great revenue. Thoſe who live in another country contribute nothing, by their conſumption, towards the ſupport of the government of that country, in which is ſituated the ſource of their revenue. If in this latter country there ſhould be no land-tax, nor any conſiderable duty upon the transference either of moveable or of immoveable property, as is the caſe in Ireland, ſuch abſentees may derive a great revenue from the protection of a government to the ſupport of which they do not contribute a ſingle ſhilling. This inequality is likely to be greateſt in a country of which the government is in ſome reſpects ſubordinate and dependent upon that of ſome other. The people who poſſeſs the moſt extenſive property in the dependent, will in this caſe generally chuſe to live in the governing country. Ireland is preciſely in this ſituation, and we cannot therefore wonder that the propoſal of a tax upon abſentees ſhould be ſo very popular in that country. It might,

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perhaps, be a little difficult to aſcertain either what ſort, or what degree of abſence would ſubject a man to be taxed as an abſentee, or at what preciſe time the tax ſhould either begin or end. If you except, however, this very peculiar ſituation, any inequality in the contribution of individuals, which can ariſe from ſuch taxes, is much more than compenſated by the very circumſtance which occaſions that inequality; the circumſtance that every man's contribution is altogether voluntary; it being altogether in his power either to conſume or not to conſume the commodity taxed. Where ſuch taxes, therefore, are properly aſſeſſed and upon proper commodities, they are paid with leſs grumbling than any other. When they are advanced by the merchant or manufacturer, the conſumer, who finally pays them, ſoon comes to confound them with the price of the commodities, and almoſt forgets that he pays any tax.

Such taxes are or may be perfectly certain, or may be aſſeſſed ſo as to leave no doubt concerning either what ought to be paid, or when it ought to be paid; concerning either the quantity or the time of payment. Whatever uncertainty there may ſometimes be, either in the duties of cuſtoms in Great Britain, or in other duties of the ſame kind in other countries, it cannot ariſe from the nature of thoſe duties, but from the inaccurate or unſkilful manner in which the law that impoſes them is expreſſed.

Taxes upon luxuries generally are, and always may be, paid piece-meal, or in proportion

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as the contributors have occaſion to purchaſe the goods upon which they are impoſed. In the time and mode of payment they are, or may be, of all taxes the moſt convenient. Upon the whole, ſuch taxes, therefore, are, perhaps, as agreeable to the three firſt of the four general maxims concerning taxation, as any other. They offend in every reſpect againſt the fourth.

Such taxes, in proportion to what they bring into the public treaſury of the ſtate, always take out or keep out of the pockets of the people more than almoſt any other taxes. They ſeem to do this in all the four different ways in which it is poſſible to do it.

Firſt, the levying of ſuch taxes, even when impoſed in the moſt judicious manner, requires a great number of cuſtom-houſe and exciſe officers, whoſe ſalaries and perquiſites are a real tax upon the people, which brings nothing into the treaſury of the ſtate. This expence, however, it muſt be acknowledged, is more moderate in Great Britain than in moſt other countries. In the year which ended on the fifth of July 1775, the groſs produce of the different duties, under the management of the commiſſioners of exciſe in England, amounted to 5,507,308*l.* 18*s.* 8¼*d.* which was levied at an expence of little more than five and a half per cent. From this groſs produce, however, there muſt be deducted what was paid away in bounties and drawbacks upon the exportation of exciſeable goods, which will reduce the neat produce below five

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millions*. The levying of the ſalt duty, an exciſe duty, but under a different management, is much more expenſive. The neat revenue of the cuſtoms does not amount to two millions and a half, which is levied at an expence of more than ten per cent. in the ſalaries of officers, and other incidents. But the perquiſites of cuſtom-houſe officers are every where much greater than their ſalaries; at ſome ports more than double or triple thoſe ſalaries. If the ſalaries of offices, and other incidents, therefore, amount to more than ten per cent. upon the neat revenue of the cuſtoms; the whole expence of levying that revenue may amount, in ſalaries and perquiſites together, to more than twenty or thirty per cent. The officers of exciſe receive few or no perquiſites: and the adminiſtration of that branch of the revenue being of more recent eſtabliſhment, is in general leſs corrupted than that of the cuſtoms, into which length of time has introduced and authoriſed many abuſes. By charging upon malt the whole revenue which is at preſent levied by the different duties upon malt and malt liquors, a ſaving, it is ſuppoſed, of more than fifty thouſand pounds might be made in the annual expence of the exciſe. By confining the duties of cuſtoms to a few ſorts of goods, and by levying thoſe duties according to the exciſe laws, a much greater ſaving might

* The neat produce of that year, after deducting all expences and allowances, amounted to 4,975,652*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.*

probably

probably be made in the annual expence of the customs. CHAP. II.

Secondly, such taxes necessarily occasion some obstruction or discouragement to certain branches of industry. As they always raise the price of the commodity taxed, they so far discourage its consumption, and consequently its production. If it is a commodity of home growth or manufacture, less labour comes to be employed in raising and producing it. If it is a foreign commodity of which the tax increases in this manner the price, the commodities of the same kind which are made at home may thereby, indeed, gain some advantage in the home market, and a greater quantity of domestic industry may thereby be turned toward preparing them. But though this rise of price in a foreign commodity may encourage domestic industry in one particular branch, it necessarily discourages that industry in almost every other. The dearer the Birmingham manufacturer buys his foreign wine, the cheaper he necessarily sells that part of his hardware with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which he buys it. That part of his hardware, therefore, becomes of less value to him, and he has less encouragement to work at it. The dearer the consumers in one country pay for the surplus produce of another, the cheaper they necessarily sell that part of their own surplus produce with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which they buy it. That part of their own surplus produce

becomes

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becomes of leſs value to them, and they have leſs encouragement to increaſe its quantity. All taxes upon conſumable commodities, therefore, tend to reduce the quantity of productive labour below what it otherwiſe would be, either in preparing the commodities taxed, if they are home commodities; or in preparing thoſe with which they are purchaſed, if they are foreign commodities. Such taxes too always alter, more or leſs, the natural direction of national induſtry, and turn it into a channel always different from, and generally leſs advantageous than that in which it would have run of its own accord.

Thirdly, the hope of evading ſuch taxes by ſmuggling gives frequent occaſion to forfeitures and other penalties, which entirely ruin the ſmuggler; a perſon who, though no doubt highly blameable for violating the laws of his country, is frequently incapable of violating thoſe of natural juſtice, and would have been, in every reſpect, an excellent citizen, had not the laws of his country made that a crime which nature never meant to be ſo. In thoſe corrupted governments where there is at leaſt a general ſuſpicion of much unneceſſary expence, and great miſapplication of the public revenue, the laws which guard it are little reſpected. Not many people are ſcrupulous about ſmuggling, when, without perjury, they can find any eaſy and ſafe opportunity of doing ſo. To pretend to have any ſcruple about buying ſmuggled goods, though a manifeſt encouragement to the violation of the revenue laws, and to the perjury which almoſt always

always attends it, would in moſt countries be regarded as one of thoſe pedantic pieces of hypocriſy which, inſtead of gaining credit with any body, ſerve only to expoſe the perſon who affects to practiſe them, to the ſuſpicion of being a greater knave than moſt of his neighbours. By this indulgence of the public, the ſmuggler is often encouraged to continue a trade which he is thus taught to conſider as in ſome meaſure innocent; and when the ſeverity of the revenue laws is ready to fall upon him, he is frequently diſpoſed to defend with violence, what he has been accuſtomed to regard as his juſt property. From being at firſt, perhaps, rather imprudent than criminal, he at laſt too often becomes one of the hardieſt and moſt determined violators of the laws of ſociety. By the ruin of the ſmuggler, his capital, which had before been employed in maintaining productive labour, is abſorbed either in the revenue of the ſtate or in that of the revenue-officer, and is employed in maintaining unproductive, to the diminution of the general capital of the ſociety, and of the uſeful induſtry which it might otherwiſe have maintained.

Fourthly, ſuch taxes, by ſubjecting at leaſt the dealers in the taxed commodities to the frequent viſits and odious examination of the tax-gatherers, expoſe them ſometimes, no doubt, to ſome degree of oppreſſion, and always to much trouble and vexation; and though vexation, as has already been ſaid, is not ſtrictly ſpeaking

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ſpeaking expence, it is certainly equivalent to the expence at which every man would be willing to redeem himſelf from it. The laws of exciſe, though more effectual for the purpoſe for which they were inſtituted, are, in this reſpect, more vexatious than thoſe of the cuſtoms. When a merchant has imported goods ſubject to certain duties of cuſtoms, when he has paid thoſe duties, and lodged the goods in his warehouſe, he is not in moſt caſes liable to any further trouble or vexation from the cuſtom-houſe officer. It is otherwiſe with goods ſubject to duties of exciſe. The dealers have no reſpite from the continual viſits and examination of the exciſe officers. The duties of exciſe are, upon this account, more unpopular than thoſe of the cuſtoms; and ſo are the officers who levy them. Thoſe officers, it is pretended, though in general, perhaps, they do their duty fully as well as thoſe of the cuſtoms; yet, as that duty obliges them to be frequently very troubleſome to ſome of their neighbours, commonly contract a certain hardneſs of character which the others frequently have not. This obſervation, however, may very probably be the mere ſuggeſtion of fraudulent dealers, whoſe ſmuggling is either prevented or detected by their diligence.

The inconveniences, however, which are, perhaps, in ſome degree inſeparable from taxes upon conſumable commodities, fall as light upon the people of Great Britain as upon thoſe of any other country of which the government is nearly

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as expenſive. Our ſtate is not perfect, and might be mended; but it is as good or better than that of moſt of our neighbours.

In conſequence of the notion that duties upon conſumable goods were taxes upon the profits of merchants, thoſe duties have, in ſome countries, been repeated upon every ſucceſſive ſale of the goods. If the profits of the merchant importer or merchant manufacturer were taxed, equality ſeemed to require that thoſe of all the middle buyers, who intervened between either of them and the conſumer, ſhould likewiſe be taxed. The famous Alcavala of Spain ſeems to have been eſtabliſhed upon this principle. It was at firſt a tax of ten per cent., afterwards of fourteen per cent., and is at preſent of only ſix per cent. upon the ſale of every ſort of property, whether moveable or immoveable; and it is repeated every time the property is ſold *. The levying of this tax requires a multitude of revenue-officers, ſufficient to guard the tranſportation of goods, not only from one province to another, but from one ſhop to another. It ſubjects, not only the dealers in ſome ſorts of goods, but thoſe in all ſorts, every farmer, every manufacturer, every merchant and ſhop-keeper, to the continual viſits and examination of the tax-gatherers. Through the greater part of a country in which a tax of this kind is eſtabliſhed, nothing can be produced for diſtant ſale. The produce of every part of the country muſt be

* Memoires concernant les Droits, &c. tom. i. p. 455.

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proportioned to the consumption of the neighbourhood. It is to the Alcavala, accordingly, that Ustaritz imputes the ruin of the manufactures of Spain. He might have imputed to it likewise the declension of agriculture, it being imposed not only upon manufactures, but upon the rude produce of the land.

In the kingdom of Naples there is a similar tax of three per cent. upon the value of all contracts, and consequently upon that of all contracts of sale. It is both lighter than the Spanish tax, and the greater part of towns and parishes are allowed to pay a composition in lieu of it. They levy this composition in what manner they please, generally in a way that gives no interruption to the interior commerce of the place. The Neapolitan tax, therefore, is not near so ruinous as the Spanish one.

The uniform system of taxation, which, with a few exceptions of no great consequence, takes place in all the different parts of the United Kingdom of Great Britain, leaves the interior commerce of the country, the inland and coasting trade, almost entirely free. The inland trade is almost perfectly free, and the greater part of goods may be carried from one end of the kingdom to the other, without requiring any permit or let-pass, without being subject to question, visit, or examination from the revenue officers. There are a few exceptions, but they are such as can give no interruption to any important branch of the inland commerce of the country. Goods carried coastwise, indeed, require certifi-

cates or coaſt-cockets. If you except coals, however, the reſt are almoſt all duty free. This freedom of interior commerce, the effect of the uniformity of the ſyſtem of taxation, is perhaps one of the principal cauſes of the proſperity of Great Britain; every great country being neceſſarily the beſt and moſt extenſive market for the greater part of the productions of its own induſtry. If the ſame freedom, in conſequence of the ſame uniformity, could be extended to Ireland and the plantations, both the grandeur of the ſtate and the proſperity of every part of the empire, would probably be ſtill greater than at preſent. CHAP. II.

In France, the different revenue laws which take place in the different provinces, require a multitude of revenue-officers to ſurround, not only the frontiers of the kingdom, but thoſe of almoſt each particular province, in order either to prevent the importation of certain goods, or to ſubject it to the payment of certain duties, to the no ſmall interruption of the interior commerce of the country. Some provinces are allowed to compound for the gabelle or ſalt-tax. Others are exempted from it altogether. Some provinces are exempted from the excluſive ſale of tobacco, which the farmers-general enjoy through the greater part of the kingdom. The aids, which correſpond to the exciſe in England, are very different in different provinces. Some provinces are exempted from them, and pay a compoſition or equivalent. In thoſe in which they take place and are in farm, there are many local

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local duties which do not extend beyond a particular town or diſtrict. The Traites, which correſpond to our cuſtoms, divide the kingdom into three great parts; firſt, the provinces ſubject to the tariff of 1664, which are called the provinces of the five great farms, and under which are comprehended Picardy, Normandy, and the greater part of the interior provinces of the kingdom; ſecondly, the provinces ſubject to the tarif of 1667, which are called the provinces reckoned foreign, and under which are comprehended the greater part of the frontier provinces; and, thirdly, thoſe provinces which are ſaid to be treated as foreign, or which, becauſe they are allowed a free commerce with foreign countries, are in their commerce with other provinces of France ſubjected to the ſame duties as other foreign countries. Theſe are Alſace, the three biſhopricks of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, and the three cities of Dunkirk, Bayonne, and Marſeilles. Both in the provinces of the five great farms (called ſo on account of an ancient diviſion of the duties of cuſtoms into five great branches, each of which was originally the ſubject of a particular farm, though they are now all united into one), and in thoſe which are ſaid to be reckoned foreign, there are many local duties which do not extend beyond a particular town or diſtrict. There are ſome ſuch even in the provinces which are ſaid to be treated as foreign, particularly in the city of Marſeilles. It is unneceſſary to obſerve how much, both the reſtraints upon the interior commerce of the country, and the number

number of the revenue officers muſt be multiplied, in order to guard the frontiers of thoſe different provinces and diſtricts, which are ſubject to ſuch different ſyſtems of taxation. CHAP. II.

Over and above the general reſtraints ariſing from this complicated ſyſtem of revenue laws, the commerce of wine, after corn perhaps the moſt important production of France, is in the greater part of the provinces ſubject to particular reſtraints, ariſing from the favour which has been ſhewn to the vineyards of particular provinces and diſtricts, above thoſe of others. The provinces moſt famous for their wines, it will be found, I believe, are thoſe in which the trade in that article is ſubject to the feweſt reſtraints of this kind. The extenſive market which ſuch provinces enjoy, encourages good management both in the cultivation of their vineyards, and in the ſubſequent preparation of their wines.

Such various and complicated revenue laws are not peculiar to France. The little dutchy of Milan is divided into ſix provinces, in each of which there is a different ſyſtem of taxation with regard to ſeveral different ſorts of conſumable goods. The ſtill ſmaller territories of the Duke of Parma are divided into three or four, each of which has, in the ſame manner, a ſyſtem of its own. Under ſuch abſurd management, nothing but the great fertility of the ſoil and happineſs of the climate, could preſerve ſuch countries from ſoon relapſing into the loweſt ſtate of poverty and barbariſm.

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Taxes upon conſumable commodities may either be levied by an adminiſtration of which the officers are appointed by government, and are immediately accountable to government, of which the revenue muſt in this caſe vary from year to year, according to the occaſional variations in the produce of the tax; or they may be let in farm for a rent certain, the farmer being allowed to appoint his own officers, who, though obliged to levy the tax in the manner directed by the law, are under his immediate inſpection, and are immediately accountable to him. The beſt and moſt frugal way of levying a tax can never be by farm. Over and above what is neceſſary for paying the ſtipulated rent, the ſalaries of the officers, and the whole expence of adminiſtration, the farmer muſt always draw from the produce of the tax a certain profit proportioned at leaſt to the advance which he makes, to the riſk which he runs, to the trouble which he is at, and to the knowledge and ſkill which it requires to manage ſo very complicated a concern. Government, by eſtabliſhing an adminiſtration under their own immediate inſpection, of the ſame kind with that which the farmer eſtabliſhes, might at leaſt ſave this profit, which is almoſt always exorbitant. To farm any conſiderable branch of the public revenue, requires either a great capital or a great credit; circumſtances which would alone reſtrain the competition for ſuch an undertaking to a very ſmall number of people. Of the few who have this capital or credit, a ſtill ſmaller number have the neceſſary knowledge or experience; another circum-

circumſtance which reſtrains the competition ſtill further. The very few, who are in condition to become competitors, find it more for their intereſt to combine together; to become copartners inſtead of competitors, and when the farm is ſet up to auction, to offer no rent, but what is much below the real value. In countries where the public revenues are in farm, the farmers are generally the moſt opulent people. Their wealth would alone excite the public indignation, and the vanity which almoſt always accompanies ſuch upſtart fortunes, the fooliſh oſtentation with which they commonly diſplay that wealth, excites that indignation ſtill more. CHAP. II.

The farmers of the public revenue never find the laws too ſevere, which puniſh any attempt to evade the payment of a tax. They have no bowels for the contributors, who are not their ſubjects, and whoſe univerſal bankruptcy, if it ſhould happen the day after their farm is expired, would not much affect their intereſt. In the greateſt exigencies of the ſtate, when the anxiety of the ſovereign for the exact payment of his revenue is neceſſarily the greateſt, they ſeldom fail to complain that without laws more rigorous than thoſe which actually take place, it will be impoſſible for them to pay even the uſual rent. In thoſe moments of public diſtreſs their demands cannot be diſputed. The revenue laws, therefore, become gradually more and more ſevere. The moſt ſanguinary are always to be found in countries where the greater part of the public revenue is in farm. The mildeſt, in

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countries where it is levied under the immediate inſpection of the ſovereign. Even a bad ſovereign feels more compaſſion for his people than can ever be expected from the farmers of his revenue. He knows that the permanent grandeur of his family depends upon the proſperity of his people, and he will never knowingly ruin that proſperity for the ſake of any momentary intereſt of his own. It is otherwiſe with the farmers of his revenue, whoſe grandeur may frequently be the effect of the ruin, and not of the proſperity of his people.

A tax is ſometimes not only farmed for a certain rent, but the farmer has, beſides, the monopoly of the commodity taxed. In France, the duties upon tobacco and ſalt are levied in this manner. In ſuch caſes the farmer, inſtead of one, levies two exorbitant profits upon the people; the profit of the farmer, and the ſtill more exorbitant one of the monopoliſt. Tobacco being a luxury, every man is allowed to buy or not to buy as he chuſes. But ſalt being a neceſſary, every man is obliged to buy of the farmer a certain quantity of it; becauſe, if he did not buy this quantity of the farmer, he would, it is preſumed, buy it of ſome ſmuggler. The taxes upon both commodities are exorbitant. The temptation to ſmuggle conſequently is to many people irreſiſtible, while at the ſame time the rigour of the law, and the vigilance of the farmer's officers, render the yielding to that temptation almoſt certainly ruinous. The ſmuggling of ſalt and tobacco ſends every year ſeveral hundred

hundred people to the gallies, beſides a very conſiderable number whom it ſends to the gibbet. Thoſe taxes levied in this manner yield a very conſiderable revenue to government. In 1767, the farm of tobacco was let for twenty-two millions five hundred and forty-one thouſand two hundred and ſeventy-eight livres a-year. That of ſalt, for thirty-ſix millions four hundred and ninety-two thouſand four hundred and four livres. The farm in both caſes was to commence in 1768, and to laſt for ſix years. Thoſe who conſider the blood of the people as nothing in compariſon with the revenue of the prince, may perhaps approve of this method of levying taxes. Similar taxes and monopolies of ſalt and tobacco have been eſtabliſhed in many other countries; particularly in the Auſtrian and Pruſſian dominions, and in the greater part of the ſtates of Italy.

In France, the greater part of the actual revenue of the crown is derived from eight different ſources; the taille, the capitation, the two vingtiemes, the gabelles, the aides, the traites, the domaine, and the farm of tobacco. The five laſt are, in the greater part of the provinces, under farm. The three firſt are every where levied by an adminiſtration under the immediate inſpection and direction of government, and it is univerſally acknowledged that, in proportion to what they take out of the pockets of the people they bring more into the treaſury of the prince than the other five, of which the adminiſtration is much more waſteful and expenſive.

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The finances of France ſeem, in their preſent ſtate, to admit of three very obvious reformations. Firſt, by aboliſhing the taille and the capitation, and by encreaſing the number of vingtiemes, ſo as to produce an additional revenue equal to the amount of thoſe other taxes, the revenue of the crown might be preſerved; the expence of collection might be much diminiſhed; the vexation of the inferior ranks of people, which the taille and capitation occaſion, might be entirely prevented; and the ſuperior ranks might not be more burdened than the greater part of them are at preſent. The vingtieme, I have already obſerved, is a tax very nearly of the ſame kind with what is called the land-tax of England. The burden of the taille, it is acknowledged, falls finally upon the proprietors of land; and as the greater part of the capitation is aſſeſſed upon thoſe who are ſubject to the taille at ſo much a pound of that other tax, the final payment of the greater part of it muſt likewiſe fall upon the ſame order of people. Though the number of the vingtiemes, therefore, was increaſed, ſo as to produce an additional revenue equal to the amount of both thoſe taxes, the ſuperior ranks of people might not be more burdened than they are at preſent. Many individuals no doubt would, on account of the great inequalities with which the taille is commonly aſſeſſed upon the eſtates and tenants of different individuals. The intereſt and oppoſition of ſuch favoured ſubjects are the obſtacles moſt likely to prevent this or any other reformation of the

ſame

ſame kind. Secondly, by rendering the gabelle, the aides, the traites, the taxes upon tobacco, all the different cuſtoms and exciſes, uniform in all the different parts of the kingdom, thoſe taxes might be levied at much leſs expence, and the interior commerce of the kingdom might be rendered as free as that of England. Thirdly, and laſtly, by ſubjecting all thoſe taxes to an adminiſtration under the immediate inſpection and direction of government, the exorbitant profits of the farmers general might be added to the revenue of the ſtate. The oppoſition ariſing from the private intereſt of individuals, is likely to be as effectual for preventing the two laſt as the firſt mentioned ſcheme of reformation. CHAP. II.

The French ſyſtem of taxation ſeems, in every reſpect, inferior to the Britiſh. In Great Britain ten millions ſterling are annually levied upon leſs than eight millions of people, without its being poſſible to ſay that any particular order is oppreſſed. From the collections of the Abbé Expilly, and the obſervations of the author of the Eſſay upon the Legiſlation and Commerce of Corn, it appears probable, that France, including the provinces of Lorraine and Bar, contains about twenty-three or twenty-four millions of people; three times the number perhaps contained in Great Britain. The ſoil and climate of France are better than thoſe of Great Britain. The country has been much longer in a ſtate of improvement and cultivation, and is, upon that account, better ſtocked with all thoſe things which it requires a long time to raiſe up and ac-

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cumulate, such as great towns, and convenient and well-built houses, both in town and country. With these advantages, it might be expected that in France a revenue of thirty millions might be levied for the support of the state, with as little inconveniency as a revenue of ten millions is in Great Britain. In 1765 and 1766, the whole revenue paid into the treasury of France, according to the best, though, I acknowledge, very imperfect, accounts which I could get of it, usually run between 308 and 325 millions of livres; that is, it did not amount to fifteen millions sterling; not the half of what might have been expected, had the people contributed in the same proportion to their numbers as the people of Great Britain. The people of France, however, it is generally acknowledged, are much more oppressed by taxes than the people of Great Britain. France, however, is certainly the great empire in Europe which, after that of Great Britain, enjoys the mildest and most indulgent government.

In Holland the heavy taxes upon the necessaries of life have ruined, it is said, their principal manufactures, and are likely to discourage gradually even their fisheries and their trade in ship building. The taxes upon the necessaries of life are inconsiderable in Great Britain, and no manufacture has hitherto been ruined by them. The British taxes which bear hardest on manufactures are some duties upon the importation of raw materials, particularly upon that of raw silk. The revenue of the states general and

and of the different cities, however, is ſaid to amount to more than five millions two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling; and as the inhabitants of the United Provinces cannot well be ſuppoſed to amount to more than a third part of thoſe of Great Britain, they muſt, in proportion to their number, be much more heavily taxed. CHAP. II.

After all the proper ſubjects of taxation have been exhauſted, if the exigencies of the ſtate ſtill continue to require new taxes, they muſt be impoſed upon improper ones. The taxes upon the neceſſaries of life, therefore, may be no impeachment of the wiſdom of that republic, which, in order to acquire and to maintain its independency, has, in ſpite of its great frugality, been involved in ſuch expenſive wars as have obliged it to contract great debts. The ſingular countries of Holland and Zealand, beſides, require a conſiderable expence even to preſerve their exiſtence, or to prevent their being ſwallowed up by the ſea, which muſt have contributed to increaſe conſiderably the load of taxes in thoſe two provinces. The republican form of government ſeems to be the principal ſupport of the preſent grandeur of Holland. The owners of great capitals, the great mercantile families, have generally either ſome direct ſhare, or ſome indirect influence, in the adminiſtration of that government. For the ſake of the reſpect and authority which they derive from this ſituation, they are willing to live in a country where their capital, if they employ it themſelves, will bring them

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them leſs profit, and if they lend it to another, leſs intereſt; and where the very moderate revenue which they can draw from it will purchaſe leſs of the neceſſaries and conveniences of life than in any other part of Europe. The reſidence of ſuch wealthy people neceſſarily keeps alive, in ſpite of all diſadvantages, a certain degree of induſtry in the country. Any public calamity which ſhould deſtroy the republican form of government, which ſhould throw the whole adminiſtration into the hands of nobles and of ſoldiers, which would annihilate altogether the importance of thoſe wealthy merchants, would ſoon render it diſagreeable to them to live in a country where they were no longer likely to be much reſpected. They would remove both their reſidence and their capital to ſome other country, and the induſtry and commerce of Holland would ſoon follow the capitals which ſupported them.

CHAP. III.

Of public Debts.

IN that rude ſtate of ſociety which precedes the extenſion of commerce and the improvement of manufactures, when thoſe expenſive luxuries which commerce and manufactures can alone introduce, are altogether unknown, the perſon who poſſeſſes a large revenue, I have endeavoured

to

to ſhew in the third book of this Inquiry, can ſpend or enjoy that revenue in no other way than by maintaining nearly as many people as it can maintain. A large revenue may at all times be ſaid to conſiſt in the command of a large quantity of the neceſſaries of life. In that rude ſtate of things it is commonly paid in a large quantity of thoſe neceſſaries, in the materials of plain food and coarſe clothing, in corn and cattle, in wool and raw hides. When neither commerce nor manufactures furniſh any thing for which the owner can exchange, the greater part of thoſe materials which are over and above his own conſumption, he can do nothing with the ſurplus but feed and clothe nearly as many people as it will feed and clothe. A hoſpitality in which there is no luxury, and a liberality in which there is no oſtentation, occaſion, in this ſituation of things, the principal expences of the rich and the great. But theſe, I have likewiſe endeavoured to ſhew in the ſame book, are expences by which people are not very apt to ruin themſelves. There is not, perhaps, any ſelfiſh pleaſure ſo frivolous, of which the purſuit has not ſometimes ruined even ſenſible men. A paſſion for cock-fighting has ruined many. But the inſtances, I believe, are not very numerous of people who have been ruined by a hoſpitality or liberality of this kind; though the hoſpitality of luxury and the liberality of oſtentation have ruined many. Among our feudal anceſtors, the long time during which eſtates uſed to continue in the ſame family, ſufficiently demonſtrates the general diſpoſition of people

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people to live within their income. Though the ruſtic hoſpitality, conſtantly exerciſed by the great land-holders, may not, to us in the preſent times, ſeem conſiſtent with that order, which we are apt to conſider as inſeparably connected with good œconomy, yet we muſt certainly allow them to have been at leaſt ſo far frugal as not commonly to have ſpent their whole income. A part of their wool and raw hides they had generally an opportunity of ſelling for money. Some part of this money, perhaps, they ſpent in purchaſing the few objects of vanity and luxury, with which the circumſtances of the times could furniſh them; but ſome part of it they ſeem commonly to have hoarded. They could not well indeed do any thing elſe but hoard whatever money they ſaved. To trade was diſgraceful to a gentleman, and to lend money at intereſt, which at that time was conſidered as uſury and prohibited by law, would have been ſtill more ſo. In thoſe times of violence and diſorder, beſides, it was convenient to have a hoard of money at hand, that in caſe they ſhould be driven from their own home, they might have ſomething of known value to carry with them to ſome place of ſafety. The ſame violence, which made it convenient to hoard, made it equally convenient to conceal the hoard. The frequency of treaſure-trove, or of treaſure found of which no owner was known, ſufficiently demonſtrates the frequency in thoſe times both of hoarding and of concealing the hoard. Treaſure-trove was then conſidered as an important branch of the revenue of the ſovereign.

vereign. All the treaſure-trove of the kingdom would ſcarce perhaps in the preſent times make an important branch of the revenue of a private gentleman of a good eſtate.

The ſame diſpoſition to ſave and to hoard prevailed in the ſovereign, as well as in the ſubjects. Among nations to whom commerce and manufactures are little known, the ſovereign, it has already been obſerved in the fourth book, is in a ſituation which naturally diſpoſes him to the parſimony requiſite for accumulation. In that ſituation the expence even of a ſovereign cannot be directed by that vanity which delights in the gaudy finery of a court. The ignorance of the times affords but few of the trinkets in which that finery conſiſts. Standing armies are not then neceſſary, ſo that the expence even of a ſovereign, like that of any other great lord, can be employed in ſcarce any thing but bounty to his tenants, and hoſpitality to his retainers. But bounty and hoſpitality very ſeldom lead to extravagance; though vanity almoſt always does. All the ancient ſovereigns of Europe accordingly, it has already been obſerved, had treaſures. Every Tartar chief in the preſent times is ſaid to have one.

In a commercial country abounding with every ſort of expenſive luxury, the ſovereign, in the ſame manner as almoſt all the great proprietors in his dominions, naturally ſpends a great part of his revenue in purchaſing thoſe luxuries. His own and the neighbouring countries ſupply him abundantly with all the coſtly trinkets which compoſe

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compoſe the ſplendid, but inſignificant pageantry of a court. For the ſake of an inferior pageantry of the ſame kind, his nobles diſmiſs their retainers, make their tenants independent, and become gradually themſelves as inſignificant as the greater part of the wealthy burghers in his dominions. The ſame frivolous paſſions, which influence their conduct, influence his. How can it be ſuppoſed that he ſhould be the only rich man in his dominions who is inſenſible to pleaſures of this kind? If he does not, what he is very likely to do, ſpend upon thoſe pleaſures ſo great a part of his revenue as to debilitate very much the defenſive power of the ſtate, it cannot well be expected that he ſhould not ſpend upon them all that part of it which is over and above what is neceſſary for ſupporting that defenſive power. His ordinary expence becomes equal to his ordinary revenue, and it is well if it does not frequently exceed it. The amaſſing of treaſure can no longer be expected, and when extraordinary exigencies require extraordinary expences, he muſt neceſſarily call upon his ſubjects for an extraordinary aid. The preſent and the late King of Pruſſia are the only great princes of Europe, who, ſince the death of Henry IV. of France in 1610, are ſuppoſed to have amaſſed any conſiderable treaſure. The parſimony which leads to accumulation has become almoſt as rare in republican as in monarchical governments. The Italian republics, the United Provinces of the Netherlands, are all in debt. The canton of Berne is the ſingle republic in Europe which has

has amaſſed any conſiderable treaſure. The other Swiſs republics have not. The taſte for ſome ſort of pageantry, for ſplendid buildings, at leaſt, and other public ornaments, frequently prevails as much in the apparently ſober ſenate-houſe of a little republic, as in the diſſipated court of the greateſt king.

The want of parſimony in time of peace, impoſes the neceſſity of contracting debt in time of war. When war comes, there is no money in the treaſury but what is neceſſary for carrying on the ordinary expence of the peace eſtabliſhment. In war an eſtabliſhment of three or four times that expence becomes neceſſary for the defence of the ſtate, and conſequently a revenue three or four times greater than the peace revenue. Suppoſing that the ſovereign ſhould have, what he ſcarce ever has, the immediate means of augmenting his revenue in proportion to the augmentation of his expence, yet ſtill the produce of the taxes, from which this increaſe of revenue muſt be drawn, will not begin to come into the treaſury till perhaps ten or twelve months after they are impoſed. But the moment in which war begins, or rather the moment in which it appears likely to begin, the army muſt be augmented, the fleet muſt be fitted out, the garriſoned towns muſt be put into a poſture of defence; that army, that fleet, thoſe garriſoned towns muſt be furniſhed with arms, ammunition, and proviſions. An immediate and great expence muſt be incurred in that moment of immediate danger, which will not wait for the gradual and ſlow returns

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returns of the new taxes. In this exigency government can have no other reſource but in borrowing.

The ſame commercial ſtate of ſociety which, by the operation of moral cauſes, brings government in this manner into the neceſſity of borrowing, produces in the ſubjects both an ability and an inclination to lend. If it commonly brings along with it the neceſſity of borrowing, it likewiſe brings with it the facility of doing ſo.

A country abounding with merchants and manufacturers, neceſſarily abounds with a ſet of people through whoſe hands not only their own capitals, but the capitals of all thoſe who either lend them money, or truſt them with goods, paſs as frequently, or more frequently, than the revenue of a private man, who, without trade or buſineſs, lives upon his income, paſſes through his hands. The revenue of ſuch a man can regularly paſs through his hands only once in a year. But the whole amount of the capital and credit of a merchant, who deals in a trade of which the returns are very quick, may ſometimes paſs through his hands two, three, or four times in a year. A country abounding with merchants and manufacturers, therefore, neceſſarily abounds with a ſet of people who have it at all times in their power to advance, if they chuſe to do ſo, a very large ſum of money to government. Hence the ability in the ſubjects of a commercial ſtate to lend.

Commerce and manufactures can ſeldom flouriſh long in any ſtate which does not enjoy a regular adminiſtration of juſtice, in which the

people do not feel themſelves ſecure in the poſ- CHAP. III.
ſeſſion of their property, in which the faith of contracts is not ſupported by law, and in which the authority of the ſtate is not ſuppoſed to be regularly employed in enforcing the payment of debts from all thoſe who are able to pay. Commerce and manufactures, in ſhort, can ſeldom flouriſh in any ſtate in which there is not a certain degree of confidence in the juſtice of government. The ſame confidence which diſpoſes great merchants and manufacturers, upon ordinary occaſions, to truſt their property to the protection of a particular government; diſpoſes them, upon extraordinary occaſions, to truſt that government with the uſe of their property. By lending money to government, they do not even for a moment diminiſh their ability to carry on their trade and manufactures. On the contrary, they commonly augment it. The neceſſities of the ſtate render government upon moſt occaſions willing to borrow upon terms extremely advantageous to the lender. The ſecurity which it grants to the original creditor, is made tranſferable to any other creditor, and, from the univerſal confidence in the juſtice of the ſtate, generally ſells in the market for more than was originally paid for it. The merchant or monied man makes money by lending money to government, and inſtead of diminiſhing, increaſes his trading capital. He generally conſiders it as a favour, therefore, when the adminiſtration admits him to a ſhare in the firſt ſubſcription

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for a new loan. Hence the inclination or willingneſs in the ſubjects of a commercial ſtate to lend.

The government of ſuch a ſtate is very apt to repoſe itſelf upon this ability and willingneſs of its ſubjects to lend it their money on extraordinary occaſions. It foreſees the facility of borrowing, and therefore diſpenſes itſelf from the duty of ſaving.

In a rude ſtate of ſociety there are no great mercantile or manufacturing capitals. The individuals, who hoard whatever money they can ſave, and who conceal their hoard, do ſo from a diſtruſt of the juſtice of government, from a fear that if it was known that they had a hoard, and where that hoard was to be found, they would quickly be plundered. In ſuch a ſtate of things few people would be able, and no body would be willing, to lend their money to government on extraordinary exigencies. The ſovereign feels that he muſt provide for ſuch exigencies by ſaving, becauſe he foreſees the abſolute impoſſibility of borrowing. This foreſight increaſes ſtill further his natural diſpoſition to ſave.

The progreſs of the enormous debts which at preſent oppreſs, and will in the long-run probably ruin, all the great nations of Europe, has been pretty uniform. Nations, like private men, have generally begun to borrow upon what may be called perſonal credit, without aſſigning or mortgaging any particular fund for the payment of the debt; and when this reſource has

4 failed

failed them, they have gone on to borrow upon assignments or mortgages of particular funds. CHAP. III.

What is called the unfunded debt of Great Britain, is contracted in the former of those two ways. It consists partly in a debt which bears, or is supposed to bear, no interest, and which resembles the debts that a private man contracts upon account; and partly in a debt which bears interest, and which resembles what a private man contracts upon his bill or promissory note. The debts which are due either for extraordinary services, or for services either not provided for, or not paid at the time when they are performed; part of the extraordinaries of the army, navy, and ordnance, the arrears of subsidies to foreign princes, those of seamen's wages, &c. usually constitute a debt of the first kind. Navy and Exchequer bills, which are issued sometimes in payment of a part of such debts and sometimes for other purposes, constitute a debt of the second kind; Exchequer bills bearing interest from the day on which they are issued, and navy bills six months after they are issued. The bank of England, either by voluntarily discounting those bills at their current value, or by agreeing with government for certain considerations to circulate Exchequer bills, that is, to receive them at par, paying the interest which happens to be due upon them, keeps up their value and facilitates their circulation, and thereby frequently enables government to contract a very large debt of this kind. In France, where there is no bank, the state bills (billets d'état *) have

* See Examen des Reflexions politiques sur les Finances.

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ſometimes ſold at ſixty and ſeventy per cent. diſcount. During the great re-coinage in King William's time, when the bank of England thought proper to put a ſtop to its uſual tranſactions, Exchequer bills and tallies are ſaid to have ſold from twenty-five to ſixty per cent. diſcount; owing partly, no doubt, to the ſuppoſed inſtability of the new government eſtabliſhed by the Revolution, but partly too to the want of the ſupport of the bank of England.

When this reſource is exhauſted, and it becomes neceſſary, in order to raiſe money, to aſſign or mortgage ſome particular branch of the public revenue for the payment of the debt, government has upon different occaſions done this in two different ways. Sometimes it has made this aſſignment or mortgage for a ſhort period of time only, a year, or a few years, for example; and ſometimes for perpetuity. In the one caſe, the fund was ſuppoſed ſufficient to pay, within the limited time, both principal and intereſt of the money borrowed. In the other, it was ſuppoſed ſufficient to pay the intereſt only, or a perpetual annuity equivalent to the intereſt, government being at liberty to redeem at any time this annuity, upon paying back the principal ſum borrowed. When money was raiſed in the one way, it was ſaid to be raiſed by anticipation; when in the other, by perpetual funding, or, more ſhortly, by funding,

In Great Britain the annual land and malt taxes are regularly anticipated every year, by virtue of a borrowing clauſe conſtantly inſerted into the acts which impoſe them. The bank of England

England generally advances at an intereſt, which ſince the Revolution has varied from eight to three per cent. the ſums for which thoſe taxes are granted, and receives payment as their produce gradually comes in. If there is a deficiency, which there always is, it is provided for in the ſupplies of the enſuing year. The only conſiderable branch of the public revenue which yet remains unmortgaged is thus regularly ſpent before it comes in. Like an improvident ſpendthrift, whoſe preſſing occaſions will not allow him to wait for the regular payment of his revenue, the ſtate is in the conſtant practice of borrowing of its own factors and agents, and of paying intereſt for the uſe of its own money.

In the reign of King William, and during a great part of that of Queen Anne, before we had become ſo familiar as we are now with the practice of perpetual funding, the greater part of the new taxes were impoſed but for a ſhort period of time (for four, five, ſix, or ſeven years only), and a great part of the grants of every year conſiſted in loans upon anticipations of the produce of thoſe taxes. The produce being frequently inſufficient for paying within the limited term the principal and intereſt of the money borrowed, deficiencies aroſe, to make good which it became neceſſary to prolong the term.

In 1697, by the 8th of William III. c. 20. the deficiencies of ſeveral taxes were charged upon what was then called the firſt general mortgage or fund, conſiſting of a prolongation to the firſt

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of Auguſt, 1706, of ſeveral different taxes, which would have expired within a ſhorter term, and of which the produce was accumulated into one general fund. The deficiencies charged upon this prolonged term amounted to 5,160,459*l.* 14*s.* 9½*d.*

In 1701, thoſe duties, with ſome others, were ſtill further prolonged for the like purpoſes till the firſt of Auguſt, 1710, and were called the ſecond general mortgage or fund. The deficiencies charged upon it amounted to 2,055,999*l.* 7*s.* 11½*d.*

In 1707, thoſe duties were ſtill further prolonged, as a fund for new loans, to the firſt of Auguſt, 1712, and were called the third general mortgage or fund. The ſum borrowed upon it was 983,254*l.* 11*s.* 9½*d.*

In 1708, thoſe duties were all (except the old ſubſidy of tonnage and poundage, of which one moiety only was made a part of this fund, and a duty upon the importation of Scotch linen, which had been taken off by the articles of union) ſtill further continued, as a fund for new loans, to the firſt of Auguſt, 1714, and were called the fourth general mortgage or fund. The ſum borrowed upon it was 925,176*l.* 9*s.* 2½*d.*

In 1709, thoſe duties were all (except the old ſubſidy of tonnage and poundage, which was now left out of this fund altogether) ſtill further continued for the ſame purpoſe to the firſt of Auguſt, 1716, and were called the fifth general mortgage or fund. The ſum borrowed upon it was 922,029*l.* 6*s.* 0*d.*

In

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In 1710, thoſe duties were again prolonged to the firſt of Auguſt, 1720, and were called the ſixth general mortgage or fund. The ſum borrowed upon it was 1,296,552*l.* 9*s.* 11¾*d.*

In 1711, the ſame duties (which at this time were thus ſubject to four different anticipations), together with ſeveral others, were continued for ever, and made a fund for paying the intereſt of the capital of the South Sea company, which had that year advanced to government, for paying debts and making good deficiencies, the ſum of 9,177,967*l.* 15*s.* 4*d.*; the greateſt loan which at that time had ever been made.

Before this period, the principal, ſo far as I have been able to obſerve, the only taxes which in order to pay the intereſt of a debt had been impoſed for perpetuity, were thoſe for paying the intereſt of the money which had been advanced to government by the Bank and Eaſt India Company, and of what it was expected would be advanced, but which was never advanced, by a projected land bank. The bank fund at this time amounted to 3,375,027*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.* for which was paid an annuity or intereſt of 206,501*l.* 13*s.* 5*d.* The Eaſt India fund amounted to 3,200,000*l.* for which was paid an annuity or intereſt of 160,000*l.*; the bank fund being at ſix per cent., the Eaſt India fund at five per cent. intereſt.

In 1715, by the firſt of George I. c. 12. the different taxes which had been mortgaged for paying the bank annuity, together with ſeveral others which by this act were likewiſe rendered perpetual, were accumulated into one common

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fund called The Aggregate Fund, which was charged, not only with the payments of the bank annuity, but with ſeveral other annuities and burdens of different kinds. This fund was afterwards augmented by the third of George I. c. 8. and by the fifth of George I. c. 3. and the different duties which were then added to it were likewiſe rendered perpetual.

In 1717, by the third of George I. c. 7. ſeveral other taxes were rendered perpetual, and accumulated into another common fund, called The General Fund, for the payment of certain annuities, amounting in the whole to 724,849*l.* 6*s.* 10½*d.*

In conſequence of thoſe different acts, the greater part of the taxes which before had been anticipated only for a ſhort term of years, were rendered perpetual as a fund for paying, not the capital, but the intereſt only, of the money which had been borrowed upon them by different ſucceſſive anticipations.

Had money never been raiſed but by anticipation, the courſe of a few years would have liberated the public revenue, without any other attention of government beſides that of not overloading the fund by charging it with more debt than it could pay within the limited term, and of not anticipating a ſecond time before the expiration of the firſt anticipation. But the greater part of European governments have been incapable of thoſe attentions. They have frequently overloaded the fund even upon the firſt anticipation; and when this happened not to be the

the caſe, they have generally taken care to overload it, by anticipating a ſecond and a third time before the expiration of the firſt anticipation. The fund becoming in this manner altogether inſufficient for paying both principal and intereſt of the money borrowed upon it, it became neceſſary to charge it with the intereſt only, or a perpetual annuity equal to the intereſt, and ſuch unprovident anticipations neceſſarily gave birth to the more ruinous practice of perpetual funding. But though this practice neceſſarily puts off the liberation of the public revenue from a fixed period to one ſo indefinite that it is not very likely ever to arrive; yet as a greater ſum can in all caſes be raiſed by this new practice than by the old one of anticipations, the former, when men have once become familiar with it, has in the great exigencies of the ſtate been univerſally preferred to the latter. To relieve the preſent exigency is always the object which principally intereſts thoſe immediately concerned in the adminiſtration of public affairs. The future liberation of the public revenue, they leave to the care of poſterity.

During the reign of Queen Anne, the market rate of intereſt had fallen from ſix to five per cent., and in the twelfth year of her reign five per cent. was declared to be the higheſt rate which could lawfully be taken for money borrowed upon private ſecurity. Soon after the greater part of the temporary taxes of Great Britain had been rendered perpetual, and diſtributed into the Aggregate, South Sea, and

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General Funds, the creditors of the public, like thoſe of private perſons, were induced to accept of five per cent. for the intereſt of their money, which occaſioned a ſaving of one per cent. upon the capital of the greater part of the debts which had been thus funded for perpetuity, or of one-ſixth of the greater part of the annuities which were paid out of the three great funds above mentioned. This ſaving left a conſiderable ſurplus in the produce of the different taxes which had been accumulated into thoſe funds, over and above what was neceſſary for paying the annuities which were now charged upon them, and laid the foundation of what has ſince been called the Sinking Fund. In 1717, it amounted to 323,434*l.* 7*s.* 7½*d.* In 1727, the intereſt of the greater part of the public debts was ſtill further reduced to four per cent.; and in 1753 and 1757, to three and a half and three per cent.; which reductions ſtill further augmented the ſinking fund.

A ſinking fund, though inſtituted for the payment of old, facilitates very much the contracting of new debts. It is a ſubſidiary fund always at hand to be mortgaged in aid of any other doubtful fund, upon which money is propoſed to be raiſed in any exigency of the ſtate. Whether the ſinking fund of Great Britain has been more frequently applied to the one or to the other of thoſe two purpoſes, will ſufficiently appear by and by.

Beſides thoſe two methods of borrowing, by anticipations and by perpetual funding, there

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are two other methods, which hold a ſort of middle place between them. Theſe are, that of borrowing upon annuities for terms of years, and that of borrowing upon annuities for lives.

During the reigns of King William and Queen Anne, large ſums were frequently borrowed upon annuities for terms of years, which were ſometimes longer and ſometimes ſhorter. In 1693, an act was paſſed for borrowing one million upon an annuity of fourteen per cent., or of 140,000*l.* a year, for ſixteen years. In 1691, an act was paſſed for borrowing a million upon annuities for lives, upon terms which in the preſent times would appear very advantageous. But the ſubſcription was not filled up. In the following year the deficiency was made good by borrowing upon annuities for lives at fourteen per cent., or at little more than ſeven years purchaſe. In 1695, the perſons who had purchaſed thoſe annuities were allowed to exchange them for others of ninety-ſix years, upon paying into the Exchequer ſixty-three pounds in the hundred; that is, the difference between fourteen per cent. for life, and fourteen per cent. for ninety-ſix years, was ſold for ſixty-three pounds, or for four and a half years purchaſe. Such was the ſuppoſed inſtability of government, that even theſe terms procured few purchaſers. In the reign of Queen Anne, money was upon different occaſions borrowed both upon annuities for lives, and upon annuities for terms of thirty-two, of eighty-nine, of ninety-eight, and of ninety-nine years. In 1719, the proprietors of the

the annuities for thirty-two years were induced to accept in lieu of them South Sea ſtock to the amount of eleven and a half years purchaſe of the annuities, together with an additional quantity of ſtock equal to the arrears which happened then to be due upon them. In 1720, the greater part of the other annuities for terms of years both long and ſhort were ſubſcribed into the ſame fund. The long annuities at that time amounted to 666,821*l.* 8*s.* 3½*d.* a year. On the 5th of January, 1775, the remainder of them, or what was not ſubſcribed at that time, amounted only to 136,453*l.* 12*s.* 8*d.*

During the two wars which begun in 1739 and in 1755, little money was borrowed either upon annuities for terms of years, or upon thoſe for lives. An annuity for ninety-eight or ninety-nine years, however, is worth nearly as much money as a perpetuity, and ſhould, therefore, one might think, be a fund for borrowing nearly as much. But thoſe who, in order to make family ſettlements, and to provide for remote futurity, buy into the public ſtocks, would not care to purchaſe into one of which the value was continually diminiſhing; and ſuch people make a very conſiderable proportion both of the proprietors and purchaſers of ſtock. An annuity for a long term of years, therefore, though its intrinſic value may be very nearly the ſame with that of a perpetual annuity, will not find nearly the ſame number of purchaſers. The ſubſcribers to a new loan, who mean generally to ſell their ſubſcription as ſoon as poſſible, prefer

prefer greatly a perpetual annuity redeemable by parliament, to an irredeemable annuity for a long term of years of only equal amount. The value of the former may be ſuppoſed always the ſame, or very nearly the ſame; and it makes, therefore, a more convenient transferable ſtock than the latter. CHAP. III.

During the two laſt mentioned wars, annuities, either for terms of years or for lives, were ſeldom granted but as premiums to the ſubſcribers to a new loan, over and above the redeemable annuity or intereſt upon the credit of which the loan was ſuppoſed to be made. They were granted, not as the proper fund upon which the money was borrowed; but as an additional encouragement to the lender.

Annuities for lives have occaſionally been granted in two different ways; either upon ſeparate lives, or upon lots of lives, which in French are called Tontines, from the name of their inventor. When annuities are granted upon ſeparate lives, the death of every individual annuitant diſburthens the public revenue ſo far as it was affected by his annuity. When annuities are granted upon tontines, the liberation of the public revenue does not commence till the death of all the annuitants comprehended in one lot, which may ſometimes conſiſt of twenty or thirty perſons, of whom the ſurvivors ſucceed to the annuities of all thoſe who die before them; the laſt ſurvivor ſucceeding to the annuities of the whole lot. Upon the ſame revenue more money can always be raiſed by tontines

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tontines than by annuities for ſeparate lives. An annuity, with a right of ſurvivorſhip, is really worth more than an equal annuity for a ſeparate life, and from the confidence which every man naturally has in his own good fortune, the principle upon which is founded the ſucceſs of all lotteries, ſuch an annuity generally ſells for ſomething more than it is worth. In countries where it is uſual for government to raiſe money by granting annuities, tontines are upon this account generally preferred to annuities for ſeparate lives. The expedient which will raiſe moſt money, is almoſt always preferred to that which is likely to bring about in the ſpeedieſt manner the liberation of the public revenue.

In France a much greater proportion of the public debts conſiſts in annuities for lives than in England. According to a memoir preſented by the parliament of Bourdeaux to the King in 1764, the whole public debt of France is eſtimated at twenty-four hundred millions of livres; of which the capital for which annuities for lives had been granted, is ſuppoſed to amount to three hundred millions, the eighth part of the whole public debt. The annuities themſelves are computed to amount to thirty millions a year, the fourth part of one hundred and twenty millions, the ſuppoſed intereſt of that whole debt. Theſe eſtimations, I know very well, are not exact, but having been preſented by ſo very reſpectable a body as approximations to the truth, they may, I apprehend, be conſidered as ſuch. It is not the different degrees of anxiety

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in the two governments of France and England for the liberation of the public revenue, which occaſions this difference in their reſpective modes of borrowing. It ariſes altogether from the different views and intereſts of the lenders.

In England, the ſeat of government being in the greateſt mercantile city in the world, the merchants are generally the people who advance money to government. By advancing it they do not mean to diminiſh, but, on the contrary, to increaſe their mercantile capitals; and unleſs they expected to ſell with ſome profit their ſhare in the ſubſcription for a new loan, they never would ſubſcribe. But if by advancing their money they were to purchaſe, inſtead of perpetual annuities, annuities for lives only, whether their own or thoſe of other people, they would not always be ſo likely to ſell them with a profit. Annuities upon their own lives they would always ſell with loſs; becauſe no man will give for an annuity upon the life of another, whoſe age and ſtate of health are nearly the ſame with his own, the ſame price which he would give for one upon his own. An annuity upon the life of a third perſon, indeed, is, no doubt, of equal value to the buyer and the ſeller; but its real value begins to diminiſh from the moment it is granted, and continues to do ſo more and more as long as it ſubſiſts. It can never, therefore, make ſo convenient a transferable ſtock as a perpetual annuity, of which the real value may be ſuppoſed always the ſame, or very nearly the ſame.

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In France, the ſeat of government not being in a great mercantile city, merchants do not make ſo great a proportion of the people who advance money to government. The people concerned in the finances, the farmers general, the receivers of the taxes which are not in farm, the court bankers, &c. make the greater part of thoſe who advance their money in all public exigencies. Such people are commonly men of mean birth, but of great wealth, and frequently of great pride. They are too proud to marry their equals, and women of quality diſdain to marry them. They frequently reſolve, therefore, to live bachelors, and having neither any families of their own, nor much regard for thoſe of their relations, whom they are not always very fond of acknowledging, they deſire only to live in ſplendour during their own time, and are not unwilling that their fortune ſhould end with themſelves. The number of rich people, beſides, who are either averſe to marry, or whoſe condition of life renders it either improper or inconvenient for them to do ſo, is much greater in France than in England. To ſuch people, who have little or no care for poſterity, nothing can be more convenient than to exchange their capital for a revenue, which is to laſt juſt as long, and no longer than they wiſh it to do.

The ordinary expence of the greater part of modern governments in time of peace being equal or nearly equal to their ordinary revenue, when war comes, they are both unwilling and unable to increaſe their revenue in proportion

to the increaſe of their expence. They are unwilling, for fear of offending the people, who, by ſo great and ſo ſudden an increaſe of taxes, would ſoon be diſguſted with the war; and they are unable, from not well knowing what taxes would be ſufficient to produce the revenue wanted. The facility of borrowing delivers them from the embarraſſment which this fear and inability would otherwiſe occaſion. By means of borrowing they are enabled, with a very moderate increaſe of taxes, to raiſe, from year to year, money ſufficient for carrying on the war, and by the practice of perpetual funding, they are enabled, with the ſmalleſt poſſible increaſe of taxes, to raiſe annually the largeſt poſſible ſum of money. In great empires, the people who live in the capital, and in the provinces remote from the ſcene of action, feel, many of them, ſcarce any inconveniency from the war; but enjoy, at their eaſe, the amuſement of reading in the newſpapers the exploits of their own fleets and armies. To them this amuſement compenſates the ſmall difference between the taxes which they pay on account of the war, and thoſe which they had been accuſtomed to pay in time of peace. They are commonly diſſatisfied with the return of peace, which puts an end to their amuſement, and to a thouſand viſionary hopes of conqueſt and national glory, from a longer continuance of the war.

The return of peace, indeed, ſeldom relieves them from the greater part of the taxes impoſed during the war. Theſe are mortgaged for the

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intereſt of the debt contracted in order to carry it on. If, over and above paying the intereſt of this debt, and defraying the ordinary expence of government, the old revenue, together with the new taxes, produce ſome ſurplus revenue, it may perhaps be converted into a ſinking fund for paying off the debt. But, in the firſt place, this ſinking fund, even ſuppoſing it ſhould be applied to no other purpoſe, is generally altogether inadequate for paying, in the courſe of any period during which it can reaſonably be expected that peace ſhould continue, the whole debt contracted during the war; and, in the ſecond place, this fund is almoſt always applied to other purpoſes.

The new taxes were impoſed for the ſole purpoſe of paying the intereſt of the money borrowed upon them. If they produce more, it is generally ſomething which was neither intended nor expected, and is therefore ſeldom very conſiderable. Sinking funds have generally ariſen, not ſo much from any ſurplus of the taxes which was over and above what was neceſſary for paying the intereſt or annuity originally charged upon them, as from a ſubſequent reduction of that intereſt. That of Holland, in 1655, and that of the Eccleſiaſtical State, in 1685, were both formed in this manner. Hence the uſual inſufficiency of ſuch funds.

During the moſt profound peace, various events occur which require an extraordinary expence, and government finds it always more convenient to defray this expence by miſapplying

the ſinking fund than by impoſing a new tax. Every new tax is immediately felt more or leſs by the people. It occaſions always ſome murmur, and meets with ſome oppoſition. The more taxes may have been multiplied, the higher they may have been raiſed upon every different ſubject of taxation; the more loudly the people complain of every new tax, the more difficult it becomes too either to find out new ſubjects of taxation, or to raiſe much higher the taxes already impoſed upon the old. A momentary ſuſpenſion of the payment of debt is not immediately felt by the people, and occaſions neither murmur nor complaint. To borrow of the ſinking fund is always an obvious and eaſy expedient for getting out of the preſent difficulty. The more the public debts may have been accumulated, the more neceſſary it may have become to ſtudy to reduce them, the more dangerous, the more ruinous it may be to miſapply any part of the ſinking fund; the leſs likely is the public debt to be reduced to any conſiderable degree, the more likely, the more certainly is the ſinking fund to be miſapplied towards defraying all the extraordinary expences which occur in time of peace. When a nation is already overburdened with taxes, nothing but the neceſſities of a new war, nothing but either the animoſity of national vengeance, or the anxiety for national ſecurity, can induce the people to ſubmit, with tolerable patience, to a new tax. Hence the uſual miſapplication of the ſinking fund.

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In Great Britain, from the time that we had firſt recourſe to the ruinous expedient of perpetual funding, the reduction of the public debt in time of peace, has never borne any proportion to its accumulation in time of war. It was in the war which began in 1688, and was concluded by the treaty of Ryſwick, in 1697, that the foundation of the preſent enormous debt of Great Britain was firſt laid.

On the 31ſt of December 1697, the public debts of Great Britain, funded and unfunded, amounted to 21,515,742*l.* 13*s.* 8½*d.* A great part of thoſe debts had been contracted upon ſhort anticipations, and ſome part upon annuities for lives; ſo that before the 31ſt of December 1701, in leſs than four years, there had partly been paid of, and partly reverted to the public, the ſum of 5,121,041*l.* 12*s.* 0¾*d*; a greater reduction of the public debt than has ever ſince been brought about in ſo ſhort a period of time. The remaining debt, therefore, amounted only to 16,394,701*l.* 1*s.* 7¼*d.*

In the war which began in 1702, and which was concluded by the treaty of Utrecht, the public debts were ſtill more accumulated. On the 31ſt of December 1714, they amounted to 53,681,076*l.* 5*s.* 6$\frac{1}{172}$*d.* The ſubſcription into the South Sea fund of the ſhort and long annuities increaſed the capital of the public debts, ſo that on the 31ſt of December 1722, it amounted to 55,282,978*l.* 1*s.* 3⅛*d.* The reduction of the debt began in 1723, and went on ſo ſlowly, that, on the 31ſt of December 1739, during

during ſeventeen years of profound peace, the whole ſum paid off was no more than 8,328,354*l.* 17*s.* 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* the capital of the public debt at that time amounting to 46,954,623*l.* 3*s.* 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* CHAP. III

The Spaniſh war, which began in 1739, and the French war which ſoon followed it, occaſioned a further increaſe of the debt, which, on the 31ſt of December 1748, after the war had been concluded by the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, amounted to 78,293,313*l.* 1*s.* 10$\frac{1}{2}$*d.* The moſt profound peace of ſeventeen years continuance had taken no more than 8,328,354*l.* 17*s.* 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ *d.* from it. A war of leſs than nine years continuance added 31,338,689*l.* 18*s.* 6$\frac{1}{2}$*d.* to it*.

During the adminiſtration of Mr. Pelham, the intereſt of the public debt was reduced, or at leaſt meaſures were taken for reducing it, from four to three per cent.; the ſinking fund was increaſed, and ſome part of the public debt was paid off. In 1755, before the breaking out of the late war, the funded debt of Great Britain amounted to 72,289,673*l.* On the 5th of January 1763, at the concluſion of the peace, the funded debt amounted to 122,603,336*l.* 8*s.* 2$\frac{1}{2}$*d.* The unfunded debt has been ſtated at 13,927,589*l.* 2*s.* 2*d.* But the expence occaſioned by the war did not end with the concluſion of the peace; ſo that though, on the 5th of January 1764, the funded debt was increaſed (partly by a new loan, and partly by funding a part of the unfunded debt) to 129,586,789*l.*

* See James Poſtlethwaite's Hiſtory of the Public Revenue.

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10*s.* 1¾*d.* there ſtill remained (according to the very well informed author of the Conſiderations on the Trade and Finances of Great Britain) an unfunded debt which was brought to account in that and the following year, of 9,975,017*l.* 12*s.* 2$\frac{1}{4}\frac{5}{4}$*d.* In 1764, therefore, the public debt of Great Britain, funded and unfunded together, amounted, according to this author, to 139,516,807*l.* 2*s.* 4*d.* The annuities for lives too, which had been granted as premiums to the ſubſcribers to the new loans in 1757, eſtimated at fourteen years purchaſe, were valued at 472,500*l.*; and the annuities for long terms of years, granted as premiums likewiſe, in 1761 and 1762, eſtimated at 27½ years purchaſe, were valued at 6,826,875*l.* During a peace of about ſeven years continuance, the prudent and truly patriot adminiſtration of Mr. Pelham, was not able to pay off an old debt of ſix millions. During a war of nearly the ſame continuance, a new debt of more than ſeventy-five millions was contracted.

On the 5th of January 1775, the funded debt of Great Britain amounted to 124,996,086*l.* 1*s.* 6¼*d.* The unfunded, excluſive of a large civil liſt debt, to 4,150,236*l.* 3*s.* 11⅞*d.* Both together to 129,146,322*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.* According to this account, the whole debt paid off during eleven years profound peace amounted only to 10,415,474*l.* 16*s.* 9⅞*d.* Even this ſmall reduction of debt, however, has not been all made from the ſavings out of the ordinary revenue of the ſtate. Several extraneous ſums, altogether

altogether independent of that ordinary revenue, have contributed towards it. Amongſt theſe we may reckon an additional ſhilling in the pound land tax for three years; the two millions received from the Eaſt India Company, as indemnification for their territorial acquiſitions; and the one hundred and ten thouſand pounds received from the Bank for the renewal of their charter. To theſe muſt be added, ſeveral other ſums, which, as they aroſe out of the late war, ought perhaps to be conſidered as deductions from the expences of it. The principal are, CHAP. III.

	l.	*s.*	*d.*
The produce of French prizes	690,449	18	9
Compoſition for French priſoners	670,000	0	0
What has been received from the ſale of the ceded iſlands	95,500	0	0
Total,	1,455,949	18	9

If we add to this ſum the balance of the Earl of Chatham's and Mr. Calcraft's accounts, and other army ſavings of the ſame kind, together with what has been received from the Bank, the Eaſt India Company, and the additional ſhilling in the pound land tax; the whole muſt be a good deal more than five millions. The debt, therefore, which ſince the peace has been paid out of the ſavings from the ordinary revenue of the ſtate, has not, one year with another, amounted to half a million a year. The ſinking fund has, no doubt, been conſiderably augmented ſince the peace, by the debt which has been paid

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off, by the reduction of the redeemable four per cents. to three per cents., and by the annuities for lives which have fallen in, and, if peace were to continue, a million, perhaps, might now be annually ſpared out of it towards the diſcharge of the debt. Another million, accordingly, was paid in the courſe of laſt year; but, at the ſame time, a large civil liſt debt was left unpaid, and we are now involved in a new war, which, in its progreſs, may prove as expenſive as any of our former wars*. The new debt, which will probably be contracted before the end of the next campaign, may perhaps be nearly equal to all the old debt which has been paid off from the ſavings out of the ordinary revenue of the ſtate. It would be altogether chimerical, therefore, to expect that the public debt ſhould ever be completely diſcharged by any ſavings which are likely to be made from that ordinary revenue as it ſtands at preſent.

The public funds of the different indebted nations of Europe, particularly thoſe of England, have by one author been repreſented as the accumulation of a great capital ſuperadded to the other capital of the country, by means of which its trade is extended, its manufactures multiplied, and its lands cultivated and im-

* It has proved more expenſive than any of our former wars; and has involved us in an additional debt of more than one hundred millions. During a profound peace of eleven years, little more than ten millions of debt was paid; during a war of ſeven years, more than one hundred millions was contracted.

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proved much beyond what they could have been by means of that other capital only. He does not conſider that the capital which the firſt creditors of the public advanced to government, was, from the moment in which they advanced it, a certain portion of the annual produce turned away from ſerving in the function of a capital, to ſerve in that of a revenue; from maintaining productive labourers to maintain unproductive ones, and to be ſpent and waſted, generally in the courſe of the year, without even the hope of any future reproduction. In return for the capital which they advanced they obtained, indeed, an annuity in the public funds in moſt caſes of more than equal value. This annuity, no doubt, replaced to them their capital, and enabled them to carry on their trade and buſineſs to the ſame or perhaps to a greater extent than before; that is, they were enabled either to borrow of other people a new capital upon the credit of this annuity, or by ſelling it to get from other people a new capital of their own, equal or ſuperior to that which they had advanced to government. This new capital, however, which they in this manner either bought or borrowed of other people, muſt have exiſted in the country before, and muſt have been employed as all capitals are, in maintaining productive labour. When it came into the hands of thoſe who had advanced their money to government, though it was in ſome reſpects a new capital to them, it was not ſo to the country; but was only a capital withdrawn from certain employ-

employments in order to be turned towards others. Though it replaced to them what they had advanced to government, it did not replace it to the country. Had they not advanced this capital to government, there would have been in the country two capitals, two portions of the annual produce, inſtead of one, employed in maintaining productive labour.

When for defraying the expence of government a revenue is raiſed within the year from the produce of free or unmortgaged taxes, a certain portion of the revenue of private people is only turned away from maintaining one ſpecies of unproductive labour, towards maintaining another. Some part of what they pay in thoſe taxes might no doubt have been accumulated into capital, and conſequently employed in maintaining productive labour, but the greater part would probably have been ſpent and conſequently employed in maintaining unproductive labour. The public expence, however, when defrayed in this manner, no doubt hinders more or leſs the further accumulation of new capital; but it does not neceſſarily occaſion the deſtruction of any actually exiſting capital.

When the public expence is defrayed by funding, it is defrayed by the annual deſtruction of ſome capital which had before exiſted in the country; by the perverſion of ſome portion of the annual produce which had before been deſtined for the maintenance of productive labour, towards that of unproductive labour. As in this caſe, however, the taxes are lighter than they

they would have been, had a revenue ſufficient for defraying the ſame expence been raiſed within the year; the private revenue of individuals is neceſſarily leſs burdened, and conſequently their ability to ſave and accumulate ſome part of that revenue into capital is a good deal leſs impaired. If the method of funding deſtroy more old capital, it at the ſame time hinders leſs the accumulation or acquiſition of new capital, than that of defraying the public expence by a revenue raiſed within the year. Under the ſyſtem of funding, the frugality and induſtry of private people can more eaſily repair the breaches which the waſte and extravagance of government may occaſionally make in the general capital of the ſociety.

It is only during the continuance of war, however, that the ſyſtem of funding has this advantage over the other ſyſtem. Were the expence of war to be defrayed always by a revenue raiſed within the year, the taxes from which that extraordinary revenue was drawn would laſt no longer than the war. The ability of private people to accumulate, though leſs during the war, would have been greater during the peace than under the ſyſtem of funding. War would not neceſſarily have occaſioned the deſtruction of any old capitals, and peace would have occaſioned the accumulation of many more new. Wars would in general be more ſpeedily concluded, and leſs wantonly undertaken. The people feeling, during the continuance of the war, the complete burden of it, would ſoon grow weary of it, and

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and government, in order to humour them, would not be under the neceſſity of carrying it on longer than it was neceſſary to do ſo. The foreſight of the heavy and unavoidable burdens of war would hinder the people from wantonly calling for it when there was no real or ſolid intereſt to fight for. The ſeaſons during which the ability of private people to accumulate was ſomewhat impaired, would occur more rarely, and be of ſhorter continuance. Thoſe on the contrary, during which that ability was in the higheſt vigour, would be of much longer duration than they can well be under the ſyſtem of funding.

When funding, beſides, has made a certain progreſs, the multiplication of taxes which it brings along with it ſometimes impairs as much the ability of private people to accumulate even in time of peace, as the other ſyſtem would in time of war. The peace revenue of Great Britain amounts at preſent to more than ten millions a year. If free and unmortgaged, it might be ſufficient, with proper management and without contracting a ſhilling of new debt, to carry on the moſt vigorous war. The private revenue of the inhabitants of Great Britain is at preſent as much encumbered in time of peace, their ability to accumulate it as much impaired as it would have been in the time of the moſt expenſive war, had the pernicious ſyſtem of funding never been adopted.

In the payment of the intereſt of the public debt, it has been ſaid, it is the right hand which pays the left. The money does not go out of the

the country. It is only a part of the revenue of one ſet of the inhabitants which is transferred to another; and the nation is not a farthing the poorer. This apology is founded altogether in the ſophiſtry of the mercantile ſyſtem, and after the long examination which I have already beſtowed upon that ſyſtem, it may perhaps be unneceſſary to ſay any thing further about it. It ſuppoſes, beſides, that the whole public debt is owing to the inhabitants of the country, which happens not to be true; the Dutch, as well as ſeveral other foreign nations, having a very conſiderable ſhare in our public funds. But though the whole debt were owing to the inhabitants of the country, it would not upon that account be leſs pernicious.

Land and capital ſtock are the two original ſources of all revenue both private and public. Capital ſtock pays the wages of productive labour, whether employed in agriculture, manufactures, or commerce. The management of thoſe two original ſources of revenue belongs to two different ſets of people; the proprietors of land, and the owners or employers of capital ſtock.

The proprietor of land is intereſted for the ſake of his own revenue to keep his eſtate in as good condition as he can, by building and repairing his tenants houſes, by making and maintaining the neceſſary drains and encloſures, and all thoſe other expenſive improvements which it properly belongs to the landlord to make and maintain. But by different land-taxes the revenue

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venue of the landlord may be ſo much diminiſhed; and by different duties upon the neceſſaries and conveniences of life, that diminiſhed revenue may be rendered of ſo little real value, that he may find himſelf altogether unable to make or maintain thoſe expenſive improvements. When the landlord, however, ceaſes to do his part, it is altogether impoſſible that the tenant ſhould continue to do his. As the diſtreſs of the landlord increaſes, the agriculture of the country muſt neceſſarily decline.

When, by different taxes upon the neceſſaries and conveniences of life, the owners and employers of capital ſtock find, that whatever revenue they derive from it, will not, in a particular country, purchaſe the ſame quantity of thoſe neceſſaries and conveniences which an equal revenue would in almoſt any other, they will be diſpoſed to remove to ſome other. And when, in order to raiſe thoſe taxes, all or the greater part of merchants and manufacturers, that is, all or the greater part of the employers of great capitals, come to be continually expoſed to the mortifying and vexatious viſits of the tax-gatherers, this diſpoſition to remove will ſoon be changed into an actual removal. The induſtry of the country will neceſſarily fall with the removal of the capital which ſupported it, and the ruin of trade and manufactures will follow the declenſion of agriculture.

To transfer from the owners of thoſe two great ſources of revenue, land and capital ſtock, from the perſons immediately intereſted in the good condition

condition of every particular portion of land, and in the good management of every particular portion of capital ſtock, to another ſet of perſons (the creditors of the public, who have no ſuch particular intereſt), the greater part of the revenue ariſing from either, muſt, in the long-run, occaſion both the neglect of land, and the waſte or removal of capital ſtock. A creditor of the public has no doubt a general intereſt in the proſperity of the agriculture, manufactures, and commerce of the country; and conſequently in the good condition of its lands, and in the good management of its capital ſtock. Should there be any general failure or declenſion in any of theſe things, the produce of the different taxes might no longer be ſufficient to pay him the annuity or intereſt which is due to him. But a creditor of the public, conſidered merely as ſuch, has no intereſt in the good condition of any particular portion of land, or in the good management of any particular portion of capital ſtock. As a creditor of the public he has no knowledge of any ſuch particular portion. He has no inſpection of it. He can have no care about it. Its ruin may in ſome caſes be unknown to him, and cannot directly affect him. CHAP. III.

The practice of funding has gradually enfeebled every ſtate which has adopted it. The Italian republics ſeem to have begun it. Genoa and Venice, the only two remaining which can pretend to an independent exiſtence, have both been enfeebled by it. Spain ſeems to have learned the practice from the Italian republics, and

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and (its taxes being probably leſs judicious than theirs) it has, in proportion to its natural ſtrength, been ſtill more enfeebled. The debts of Spain are of very old ſtanding. It was deeply in debt before the end of the ſixteenth century, about a hundred years before England owed a ſhilling. France, notwithſtanding all its natural reſources, languiſhes under an oppreſſive load of the ſame kind. The republic of the United Provinces is as much enfeebled by its debts as either Genoa or Venice. Is it likely that in Great Britain alone a practice, which has brought either weakneſs or deſolation into every other country, ſhould prove altogether innocent?

The ſyſtem of taxation eſtabliſhed in thoſe different countries, it may be ſaid, is inferior to that of England. I believe it is ſo. But it ought to be remembered, that when the wiſeſt government has exhauſted all the proper ſubjects of taxation, it muſt, in caſes of urgent neceſſity, have recourſe to improper ones. The wiſe republic of Holland has upon ſome occaſions been obliged to have recourſe to taxes as inconvenient as the greater part of thoſe of Spain. Another war begun before any conſiderable liberation of the public revenue had been brought about, and growing in its progreſs as expenſive as the laſt war, may, from irreſiſtible neceſſity, render the Britiſh ſyſtem of taxation as oppreſſive as that of Holland, or even as that of Spain. To the honour of our preſent ſyſtem of taxation, indeed, it has hitherto given ſo little embarraſſment to induſtry, that during the

courſe even of the moſt expenſive wars, the frugality and good conduct of individuals ſeem to have been able, by ſaving and accumulation, to repair all the breaches which the waſte and extravagance of government had made in the general capital of the ſociety. At the concluſion of the late war, the moſt expenſive that Great Britain ever waged, her agriculture was as flouriſhing, her manufactures as numerous and as fully employed, and her commerce as extenſive, as they had ever been before. The capital, therefore, which ſupported all thoſe different branches of induſtry, muſt have been equal to what it had ever been before. Since the peace, agriculture has been ſtill further improved, the rents of houſes have riſen in every town and village of the country, a proof of the increaſing wealth and revenue of the people; and the annual amount of the greater part of the old taxes, of the principal branches of the exciſe and cuſtoms in particular, has been continually increaſing, an equally clear proof of an increaſing conſumption, and conſequently of an increaſing produce, which could alone ſupport that conſumption. Great Britain ſeems to ſupport with eaſe, a burden which, half a century ago, nobody believed her capable of ſupporting. Let us not, however, upon this account raſhly conclude that ſhe is capable of ſupporting any burden; nor even be too confident that ſhe could ſupport, without great diſtreſs, a burden a little greater than what has already been laid upon her.

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When national debts have once been accumulated to a certain degree, there is ſcarce, I believe, a ſingle inſtance of their having been fairly and completely paid. The liberation of the public revenue, if it has ever been brought about at all, has always been brought about by a bankruptcy; ſometimes by an avowed one, but always by a real one, though frequently by a pretended payment.

The raiſing of the denomination of the coin has been the moſt uſual expedient by which a real public bankruptcy has been diſguiſed under the appearance of a pretended payment. If a ſix-pence, for example, ſhould either by act of parliament or royal proclamation be raiſed to the denomination of a ſhilling, and twenty ſix-pences to that of a pound ſterling; the perſon who under the old denomination had borrowed twenty ſhillings, or near four ounces of ſilver, would, under the new, pay with twenty ſix-pences, or with ſomething leſs than two ounces. A national debt of about a hundred and twenty-eight millions, nearly the capital of the funded and unfunded debt of Great Britain, might in this manner be paid with about ſixty-four millions of our preſent money. It would indeed be a pretended payment only, and the creditors of the public would really be defrauded of ten ſhillings in the pound of what was due to them. The calamity too would extend much further than to the creditors of the public, and thoſe of every private perſon would ſuffer a proportionable loſs; and this without any advantage, but

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in moſt caſes with a great additional loſs, to the creditors of the public. If the creditors of the public indeed were generally much in debt to other people, they might in ſome meaſure compenſate their loſs by paying their creditors in the ſame coin in which the public had paid them. But in moſt countries the creditors of the public are, the greater part of them, wealthy people, who ſtand more in the relation of creditors than in that of debtors towards the reſt of their fellow-citizens. A pretended payment of this kind, therefore, inſtead of alleviating, aggravates in moſt caſes the loſs of the creditors of the public; and without any advantage to the public, extends the calamity to a great number of other innocent people. It occaſions a general and moſt pernicious ſubverſion of the fortunes of private people; enriching in moſt caſes the idle and profuſe debtor at the expence of the induſtrious and frugal creditor, and tranſporting a great part of the national capital from the hands which were likely to increaſe and improve it, to thoſe which are likely to diſſipate and deſtroy it. When it becomes neceſſary for a ſtate to declare itſelf bankrupt, in the ſame manner as when it becomes neceſſary for an individual to do ſo, a fair, open, and avowed bankruptcy is always the meaſure which is both leaſt diſhonourable to the debtor, and leaſt hurtful to the creditor. The honour of a ſtate is ſurely very poorly provided for, when, in order to cover the diſgrace of a real bankruptcy, it has recourſe to a juggling trick of this kind, ſo eaſily ſeen

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through, and at the ſame time ſo extremely pernicious.

Almoſt all ſtates, however, ancient as well as modern, when reduced to this neceſſity, have, upon ſome occaſions, played this very juggling trick. The Romans, at the end of the firſt Punic war, reduced the As, the coin or denomination by which they computed the value of all their other coins, from containing twelve ounces of copper to contain only two ounces: that is, they raiſed two ounces of copper to a denomination which had always before expreſſed the value of twelve ounces. The republic was, in this manner, enabled to pay the great debts which it had contracted with the ſixth part of what it really owed. So ſudden and ſo great a bankruptcy, we ſhould in the preſent times be apt to imagine, muſt have occaſioned a very violent popular clamour. It does not appear to have occaſioned any. The law which enacted it was, like all other laws relating to the coin, introduced and carried through the aſſembly of the people by a tribune, and was probably a very popular law. In Rome, as in all the other ancient republics, the poor people were conſtantly in debt to the rich and the great, who, in order to ſecure their votes at the annual elections, uſed to lend them money at exorbitant intereſt, which, being never paid, ſoon accumulated into a ſum too great either for the debtor to pay, or for any body elſe to pay for him. The debtor, for fear of a very ſevere execution, was obliged, without any further gratuity, to vote for

for the candidate whom the creditor recommended. In ſpite of all the laws againſt bribery and corruption, the bounty of the candidates, together with the occaſional diſtributions of corn, which were ordered by the ſenate, were the principal funds from which, during the latter times of the Roman republic, the poorer citizens derived their ſubſiſtence. To deliver themſelves from this ſubjection to their creditors, the poorer citizens were continually calling out either for an entire abolition of debts, or for what they called New Tables; that is, for a law which ſhould entitle them to a complete acquittance, upon paying only a certain proportion of their accumulated debts. The law which reduced the coin of all denominations to a ſixth part of its former value, as it enabled them to pay their debts with a ſixth part of what they really owed, was equivalent to the moſt advantageous new tables. In order to ſatisfy the people, the rich and the great were, upon ſeveral different occaſions, obliged to conſent to laws both for aboliſhing debts, and for introducing new tables; and they probably were induced to conſent to this law, partly for the ſame reaſon, and partly that, by liberating the public revenue, they might reſtore vigour to that government of which they themſelves had the principal direction. An operation of this kind would at once reduce a debt of a hundred and twenty-eight millions to twenty-one millions three hundred and thirty-three thouſand three hundred and thirty-three pounds ſix ſhillings and eight-pence.

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In the courſe of the ſecond Punic war the As was ſtill further reduced, firſt, from two ounces of copper to one ounce; and afterwards from one ounce to half an ounce; that is, to the twenty-fourth part of its original value. By combining the three Roman operations into one, a debt of a hundred and twenty-eight millions of our preſent money, might in this manner be reduced all at once to a debt of five millions three hundred and thirty-three thouſand three hundred and thirty-three pounds ſix ſhillings and eight-pence. Even the enormous debt of Great Britain might in this manner ſoon be paid.

By means of ſuch expedients the coin of, I believe, all nations has been gradually reduced more and more below its original value, and the ſame nominal ſum has been gradually brought to contain a ſmaller and a ſmaller quantity of ſilver.

Nations have ſometimes, for the ſame purpoſe, adulterated the ſtandard of their coin; that is, have mixed a greater quantity of alloy in it. If in the pound weight of our ſilver coin, for example, inſtead of eighteen penny-weight, according to the preſent ſtandard, there was mixed eight ounces of alloy; a pound ſterling, or twenty ſhillings of ſuch coin, would be worth little more than ſix ſhillings and eight-pence of our preſent money. The quantity of ſilver contained in ſix ſhillings and eight-pence of our preſent money, would thus be raiſed very nearly to the denomination of a pound ſterling. The adulteration of the ſtandard has exactly the ſame effect with what the French call an augmentation,

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or a direct raiſing of the denomination of the coin. CHAP. III.

An augmentation, or a direct raiſing of the denomination of the coin, always is, and from its nature muſt be, an open and avowed operation. By means of it pieces of a ſmaller weight and bulk are called by the ſame name which had before been given to pieces of a greater weight and bulk. The adulteration of the ſtandard, on the contrary, has generally been a concealed operation. By means of it pieces were iſſued from the mint of the ſame denominations, and, as nearly as could be contrived, of the ſame weight, bulk, and appearance, with pieces which had been current before of much greater value. When King John of France*, in order to pay his debts, adulterated his coin, all the officers of his mint were ſworn to ſecrecy. Both operations are unjuſt. But a ſimple augmentation is an injuſtice of open violence; whereas an adulteration is an injuſtice of treacherous fraud. This latter operation, therefore, as ſoon as it has been diſcovered, and it could never be concealed very long, has always excited much greater indignation than the former. The coin after any conſiderable augmentation has very ſeldom been brought back to its former weight; but after the greateſt adulterations it has almoſt always been brought back to its former fineneſs. It has ſcarce ever happened that the fury and indignation of the people could otherwiſe be appeaſed.

* See Du Cange Gloſſary, voce Moneta; the Benedictine edition.

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In the end of the reign of Henry VIII., and in the beginning of that of Edward VI., the Engliſh coin was not only raiſed in its denomination, but adulterated in its ſtandard. The like frauds were practiſed in Scotland during the minority of James VI. They have occaſionally been practiſed in moſt other countries.

That the public revenue of Great Britain can never be completely liberated, or even that any conſiderable progreſs can ever be made towards that liberation, while the ſurplus of that revenue, or what is over and above defraying the annual expence of the peace eſtabliſhment, is ſo very ſmall, it ſeems altogether in vain to expect. That liberation, it is evident, can never be brought about without either ſome very conſiderable augmentation of the public revenue, or ſome equally conſiderable reduction of the public expence.

A more equal land tax, a more equal tax upon the rent of houſes, and ſuch alterations in the preſent ſyſtem of cuſtoms and exciſe as thoſe which have been mentioned in the foregoing chapter, might perhaps, without increaſing the burden of the greater part of the people, but only diſtributing the weight of it more equally upon the whole, produce a conſiderable augmentation of revenue. The moſt ſanguine projector, however, could ſcarce flatter himſelf that any augmentation of this kind would be ſuch as could give any reaſonable hopes, either of liberating the public revenue altogether, or even of making ſuch progreſs towards that liberation in time of peace, as either

either to prevent or to compenſate the further accumulation of the public debt in the next war. CHAP. III.

By extending the Britiſh ſyſtem of taxation to all the different provinces of the empire inhabited by people of either Britiſh or European extraction, a much greater augmentation of revenue might be expected. This, however, could ſcarce, perhaps, be done, conſiſtently with the principles of the Britiſh conſtitution, without admitting into the Britiſh parliament, or if you will into the ſtates-general of the Britiſh empire, a fair and equal repreſentation of all thoſe different provinces, that of each province bearing the ſame proportion to the produce of its taxes, as the repreſentation of Great Britain might bear to the produce of the taxes levied upon Great Britain. The private intereſt of many powerful individuals, the confirmed prejudices of great bodies of people ſeem, indeed, at preſent, to oppoſe to ſo great a change ſuch obſtacles as it may be very difficult, perhaps altogether impoſſible, to ſurmount. Without, however, pretending to determine whether ſuch a union be practicable or impracticable, it may not, perhaps, be improper, in a ſpeculative work of this kind, to conſider how far the Britiſh ſyſtem of taxation might be applicable to all the different provinces of the empire; what revenue might be expected from it if ſo applied, and in what manner a general union of this kind might be likely to affect the happineſs and proſperity of the different provinces comprehended within it. Such a ſpeculation

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tion can at worſt be regarded but as a new Utopia, leſs amuſing certainly, but not more uſeleſs and chimerical than the old one.

The land-tax, the ſtamp-duties, and the different duties of cuſtoms and exciſe, conſtitute the four principal branches of the Britiſh taxes.

Ireland is certainly as able, and our American and Weſt Indian plantations more able to pay a land-tax than Great Britain. Where the landlord is ſubject neither to tithe nor poors rate, he muſt certainly be more able to pay ſuch a tax, than where he is ſubject to both thoſe other burdens. The tithe, where there is no modus, and where it is levied in kind, diminiſhes more what would otherwiſe be the rent of the landlord, than a land-tax which really amounted to five ſhillings in the pound. Such a tithe will be found in moſt caſes to amount to more than a fourth part of the real rent of the land, or of what remains after replacing completely the capital of the farmer, together with his reaſonable profit. If all moduſes and all impropriations were taken away, the complete church tithe of Great Britain and Ireland could not well be eſtimated at leſs than ſix or ſeven millions. If there was no tithe either in Great Britain or Ireland, the landlords could afford to pay ſix or ſeven millions additional land-tax, without being more burdened than a very great part of them are at preſent. America pays no tithe, and could therefore very well afford to pay a land-tax. The lands in America and the Weſt Indies, indeed, are in general not tenanted nor leaſed out

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to farmers. They could not therefore be aſſeſſed according to any rent-roll. But neither were the lands of Great Britain, in the 4th of William and Mary, aſſeſſed according to any rent-roll, but according to a very looſe and inaccurate eſtimation. The lands in America might be aſſeſſed either in the ſame manner, or according to an equitable valuation in conſequence of an accurate ſurvey, like that which was lately made in the Milaneſe, and in the dominions of Auſtria, Pruſſia, and Sardinia.

Stamp-duties, it is evident, might be levied without any variation in all countries where the forms of law proceſs, and the deeds by which property both real and perſonal is transferred, are the ſame or nearly the ſame.

The extenſion of the cuſtom-houſe laws of Great Britain to Ireland and the plantations, provided it was accompanied, as in juſtice it ought to be, with an extenſion of the freedom of trade, would be in the higheſt degree advantageous to both. All the invidious reſtraints which at preſent oppreſs the trade of Ireland, the diſtinction between the enumerated and non-enumerated commodities of America, would be entirely at an end. The countries north of Cape Finiſterre would be as open to every part of the produce of America, as thoſe ſouth of that Cape are to ſome parts of that produce at preſent. The trade between all the different parts of the Britiſh empire would, in conſequence of this uniformity in the cuſtom-houſe laws, be as free as the coaſting trade of Great Britain is at preſent. The Britiſh empire

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empire would thus afford within itſelf an immenſe internal market for every part of the produce of all its different provinces. So great an extenſion of market would ſoon compenſate both to Ireland and the plantations, all that they could ſuffer from the increaſe of the duties of cuſtoms.

The exciſe is the only part of the Britiſh ſyſtem of taxation, which would require to be varied in any reſpect according as it was applied to the different provinces of the empire. It might be applied to Ireland without any variation; the produce and conſumption of that kingdom being exactly of the ſame nature with thoſe of Great Britain. In its application to America and the Weſt Indies, of which the produce and conſumption are ſo very different from thoſe of Great Britain, ſome modification might be neceſſary, in the ſame manner as in its application to the cyder and beer counties of England.

A fermented liquor, for example, which is called beer, but which, as it is made of melaſſes, bears very little reſemblance to our beer, makes a conſiderable part of the common drink of the people in America. This liquor, as it can be kept only for a few days, cannot, like our beer, be prepared and ſtored up for ſale in great breweries; but every private family muſt brew it for their own uſe, in the ſame manner as they cook their victuals. But to ſubject every private family to the odious viſits and examination of the tax-gatherers, in the ſame manner as we ſubject the keepers of alehouſes and the brewers for public ſale, would be altogether inconſiſtent with

with liberty. If for the ſake of equality it was thought neceſſary to lay a tax upon this liquor, it might be taxed by taxing the material of which it is made, either at the place of manufacture, or, if the circumſtances of the trade rendered ſuch an exciſe improper, by laying a duty upon its importation into the colony in which it was to be conſumed. Beſides the duty of one penny a gallon impoſed by the Britiſh parliament upon the importation of melaſſes into America; there is a provincial tax of this kind upon their importation into Maſſachuſets Bay, in ſhips belonging to any other colony, of eight-pence the hogſhead; and another upon their importation, from the northern colonies, into South Carolina, of five-pence the gallon. Or if neither of theſe methods was found convenient, each family might compound for its conſumption of this liquor, either according to the number of perſons of which it conſiſted, in the ſame manner as private families compound for the malt-tax in England; or according to the different ages and ſexes of thoſe perſons, in the ſame manner as ſeveral different taxes are levied in Holland; or nearly as Sir Matthew Decker propoſes that all taxes upon conſumable commodities ſhould be levied in England. This mode of taxation, it has already been obſerved, when applied to objects of a ſpeedy conſumption, is not a very convenient one. It might be adopted, however, in caſes where no better could be done.

Sugar, rum, and tobacco, are commodities which are no where neceſſaries of life, which are become

become objects of almoſt univerſal conſumption, and which are therefore extremely proper ſubjects of taxation. If a union with the colonies were to take place, thoſe commodities might be taxed either before they go out of the hands of the manufacturer or grower; or if this mode of taxation did not ſuit the circumſtances of thoſe perſons, they might be depoſited in public warehouſes both at the place of manufacture, and at all the different ports of the empire to which they might afterwards be tranſported, to remain there, under the joint cuſtody of the owner and the revenue officer, till ſuch time as they ſhould be delivered out either to the conſumer, to the merchant retailer for home-conſumption, or to the merchant exporter, the tax not to be advanced till ſuch delivery. When delivered out for exportation, to go duty free; upon proper ſecurity being given that they ſhould really be exported out of the empire. Theſe are perhaps the principal commodities with regard to which a union with the colonies might require ſome conſiderable change in the preſent ſyſtem of Britiſh taxation.

What might be the amount of the revenue which this ſyſtem of taxation extended to all the different provinces of the empire might produce, it muſt, no doubt, be altogether impoſſible to aſcertain with tolerable exactneſs. By means of this ſyſtem there is annually levied in Great Britain, upon leſs than eight millions of people, more than ten millions of revenue. Ireland contains more than two millions of people, and

according to the accounts laid before the congreſs, the twelve aſſociated provinces of America contain more than three. Thoſe accounts, however, may have been exaggerated, in order, perhaps, either to encourage their own people, or to intimidate thoſe of this country, and we ſhall ſuppoſe therefore that our North American and Weſt Indian colonies taken together contain no more than three millions; or that the whole Britiſh empire, in Europe and America, contains no more than thirteen millions of inhabitants. If upon leſs than eight millions of inhabitants this ſyſtem of taxation raiſes a revenue of more than ten millions ſterling; it ought upon thirteen millions of inhabitants to raiſe a revenue of more than ſixteen millions two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling. From this revenue, ſuppoſing that this ſyſtem could produce it, muſt be deducted, the revenue uſually raiſed in Ireland and the plantations for defraying the expence of their reſpective civil governments. The expence of the civil and military eſtabliſhment of Ireland, together with the intereſt of the public debt, amounts, at a medium of the two years which ended March 1775, to ſomething leſs than ſeven hundred and fifty thouſand pounds a year. By a very exact account of the revenue of the principal colonies of America and the Weſt Indies, it amounted, before the commencement of the preſent diſturbances, to a hundred and forty-one thouſand eight hundred pounds. In this account, however, the revenue of Maryland, of North Carolina, and

and of all our late acquiſitions both upon the continent and in the iſlands, is omitted, which may perhaps make a difference of thirty or forty thouſand pounds. For the ſake of even numbers, therefore, let us ſuppoſe that the revenue neceſſary for ſupporting the civil government of Ireland and the plantations, may amount to a million. There would remain conſequently a revenue of fifteen millions two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds, to be applied towards defraying the general expence of the empire, and towards paying the public debt. But if from the preſent revenue of Great Britain a million could in peaceable times be ſpared towards the payment of that debt, ſix millions two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds could very well be ſpared from this improved revenue. This great ſinking fund too might be augmented every year by the intereſt of the debt which had been diſcharged the year before, and might in this manner increaſe ſo very rapidly, as to be ſufficient in a few years to diſcharge the whole debt, and thus to reſtore completely the at preſent debilitated and languiſhing vigour of the empire. In the mean time the people might be relieved from ſome of the moſt burdenſome taxes; from thoſe which are impoſed either upon the neceſſaries of life, or upon the materials of manufacture. The labouring poor would thus be enabled to live better, to work cheaper, and to ſend their goods cheaper to market. The cheapneſs of their goods would increaſe the demand for them, and conſequently for the labour of

thoſe who produced them. This increaſe in the demand for labour, would both increaſe the numbers and improve the circumſtances of the labouring poor. Their conſumption would increaſe, and together with it the revenue ariſing from all thoſe articles of their conſumption upon which the taxes might be allowed to remain.

The revenue ariſing from this ſyſtem of taxation, however, might not immediately increaſe in proportion to the number of people who were ſubjected to it. Great indulgence would for ſome time be due to thoſe provinces of the empire which were thus ſubjected to burthens to which they had not before been accuſtomed, and even when the ſame taxes came to be levied every where as exactly as poſſible, they would not every where produce a revenue proportioned to the numbers of the people. In a poor country the conſumption of the principal commodities ſubject to the duties of cuſtoms and exciſe is very ſmall; and in a thinly inhabited country the opportunities of ſmuggling are very great. The conſumption of malt liquors among the inferior ranks of people in Scotland is very ſmall, and the exciſe upon malt, beer, and ale, produces leſs there than in England, in proportion to the numbers of the people and the rate of the duties, which upon malt is different on account of a ſuppoſed difference of quality. In theſe particular branches of the exciſe, there is not, I apprehend, much more ſmuggling in the one country than in the other. The duties upon the diſtillery, and the greater part of the duties of cuſtoms, in

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proportion to the numbers of people in the reſpective countries, produce leſs in Scotland than in England, not only on account of the ſmaller conſumption of the taxed commodities, but of the much greater facility of ſmuggling. In Ireland, the inferior ranks of people are ſtill poorer than in Scotland, and many parts of the country are almoſt as thinly inhabited. In Ireland, therefore, the conſumption of the taxed commodities might, in proportion to the number of the people, be ſtill leſs than in Scotland, and the facility of ſmuggling nearly the ſame. In America and the Weſt Indies the white people even of the loweſt rank are in much better circumſtances than thoſe of the ſame rank in England, and their conſumption of all the luxuries in which they uſually indulge themſelves is probably much greater. The blacks, indeed, who make the greater part of the inhabitants both of the ſouthern colonies upon the continent and of the Weſt-India iſlands, as they are in a ſtate of ſlavery, are, no doubt, in a worſe condition than the pooreſt people either in Scotland or Ireland. We muſt not, however, upon that account, imagine that they are worſe fed, or that their conſumption of articles which might be ſubjected to moderate duties, is leſs than that even of the lower ranks of people in England. In order that they may work well, it is the intereſt of their maſter that they ſhould be fed well and kept in good heart, in the ſame manner as it is his intereſt that his working cattle ſhould be ſo. The blacks accordingly have almoſt every where their allowance

allowance of rum and of melaſſes or ſpruce beer, in the ſame manner as the white ſervants; and this allowance would not probably be withdrawn, though thoſe articles ſhould be ſubjected to moderate duties. The conſumption of the taxed commodities, therefore, in proportion to the number of inhabitants, would probably be as great in America and the Weſt Indies as in any part of the Britiſh empire. The opportunities of ſmuggling, indeed, would be much greater; America, in proportion to the extent of the country, being much more thinly inhabited than either Scotland or Ireland. If the revenue, however, which is at preſent raiſed by the different duties upon malt and malt liquors, were to be levied by a ſingle duty upon malt, the opportunity of ſmuggling in the moſt important branch of the exciſe would be almoſt entirely taken away: and if the duties of cuſtoms, inſtead of being impoſed upon almoſt all the different articles of importation, were confined to a few of the moſt general uſe and conſumption, and if the levying of thoſe duties were ſubjected to the exciſe laws, the opportunity of ſmuggling, though not ſo entirely taken away, would be very much diminiſhed. In conſequence of thoſe two, apparently, very ſimple and eaſy alterations, the duties of cuſtoms and exciſe might probably produce a revenue as great in proportion to the conſumption of the moſt thinly inhabited province as they do at preſent in proportion to that of the moſt populous.

CHAP. III.

The Americans, it has been ſaid indeed, have no gold or ſilver money; the interior commerce of the country being carried on by a paper currency, and the gold and ſilver which occaſionally come among them being all ſent to Great Britain in return for the commodities which they receive from us. But without gold and ſilver, it is added, there is no poſſibility of paying taxes. We already get all the gold and ſilver which they have. How is it poſſible to draw from them what they have not?

The preſent ſcarcity of gold and ſilver money in America is not the effect of the poverty of that country, or of the inability of the people there to purchaſe thoſe metals. In a country where the wages of labour are ſo much higher, and the price of proviſions ſo much lower than in England, the greater part of the people muſt ſurely have wherewithal to purchaſe a greater quantity, if it were either neceſſary or convenient for them to do ſo. The ſcarcity of thoſe metals therefore, muſt be the effect of choice, and not of neceſſity.

It is for tranſacting either domeſtic or foreign buſineſs, that gold and ſilver money is either neceſſary or convenient.

The domeſtic buſineſs of every country, it has been ſhewn in the ſecond book of this Inquiry, may, at leaſt in peaceable times, be tranſacted by means of a paper currency, with nearly the ſame degree of conveniency as by gold and ſilver money. It is convenient for the Americans, who could always employ with profit

profit in the improvement of their lands a greater ſtock than they can eaſily get, to ſave as much as poſſible the expence of ſo coſtly an inſtrument of commerce as gold and ſilver, and rather to employ that part of their ſurplus produce which would be neceſſary for purchaſing thoſe metals, in purchaſing the inſtruments of trade, the materials of clothing, ſeveral parts of houſehold furniture, and the iron work neceſſary for building and extending their ſettlements and plantations; in purchaſing, not dead ſtock, but active and productive ſtock. The colony governments find it for their intereſt to ſupply the people with ſuch a quantity of paper-money as is fully ſufficient and generally more than ſufficient for tranſacting their domeſtic buſineſs. Some of thoſe governments, that of Pennſylvania particularly, derive a revenue from lending this paper-money to their ſubjects at an intereſt of ſo much per cent. Others, like that of Maſſachuſett's Bay, advance upon extraordinary emergencies a paper-money of this kind for defraying the public expence, and afterwards, when it ſuits the conveniency of the colony, redeem it at the depreciated value to which it gradually falls. In 1747* that colony paid in this manner the greater part of its public debts, with the tenth part of the money for which its bills had been granted. It ſuits the conveniency of the planters to ſave the expence of employing gold and ſilver money in their domeſtic tranſactions;

* See Hutchinſon's Hiſt. of Maſſachuſett's Bay, Vol. II. page 436, & ſeq.

and it ſuits the conveniency of the colony governments to ſupply them with a medium, which, though attended with ſome very conſiderable diſadvantages, enables them to ſave that expence. The redundancy of paper-money neceſſarily baniſhes gold and ſilver from the domeſtic tranſactions of the colonies, for the ſame reaſon that it has baniſhed thoſe metals from the greater part of the domeſtic tranſactions in Scotland; and in both countries it is not the poverty, but the enterpriſing and projecting ſpirit of the people, their deſire of employing all the ſtock which they can get as active and productive ſtock, which has occaſioned this redundancy of paper-money.

In the exterior commerce which the different colonies carry on with Great Britain, gold and ſilver are more or leſs employed, exactly in proportion as they are more or leſs neceſſary. Where thoſe metals are not neceſſary, they ſeldom appear. Where they are neceſſary, they are generally found.

In the commerce between Great Britain and the tobacco colonies, the Britiſh goods are generally advanced to the coloniſts at a pretty long credit, and are afterwards paid for in tobacco, rated at a certain price. It is more convenient for the coloniſts to pay in tobacco than in gold and ſilver. It would be more convenient for any merchant to pay for the goods which his correſpondents had ſold to him in ſome other ſort of goods which he might happen to deal in, than in money. Such a merchant would have no occaſion

caſion to keep any part of his ſtock by him unemployed, and in ready money, for anſwering occaſional demands. He could have, at all times, a larger quantity of goods in his ſhop or warehouſe, and he could deal to a greater extent. But it ſeldom happens to be convenient for all the correſpondents of a merchant to receive payment for the goods which they ſell to him, in goods of ſome other kind which he happens to deal in. The Britiſh merchants who trade to Virginia and Maryland happen to be a particular ſet of correſpondents, to whom it is more convenient to receive payment for the goods which they ſell to thoſe colonies in tobacco than in gold and ſilver. They expect to make a profit by the ſale of the tobacco. They could make none by that of the gold and ſilver. Gold and ſilver, therefore, very ſeldom appear in the commerce between Great Britain and the tobacco colonies. Maryland and Virginia have as little occaſion for thoſe metals in their foreign as in their domeſtic commerce. They are ſaid, accordingly, to have leſs gold and ſilver money than any other colonies in America. They are reckoned, however, as thriving, and conſequently as rich, as any of their neighbours.

In the northern colonies, Pennſylvania, New York, New Jerſey, the four governments of New England, &c. the value of their own produce which they export to Great Britain is not equal to that of the manufactures which they import for their own uſe, and for that of ſome of the other colonies to which they are the carriers.

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riers. A balance therefore muſt be paid to the mother country in gold and ſilver, and this balance they generally find.

In the ſugar colonies the value of the produce annually exported to Great Britain is much greater than that of all the goods imported from thence. If the ſugar and rum annually ſent to the mother country were paid for in thoſe colonies, Great Britain would be obliged to ſend out every year a very large balance in money, and the trade to the Weſt Indies would, by a certain ſpecies of politicians, be conſidered as extremely diſadvantageous. But it ſo happens, that many of the principal proprietors of the ſugar plantations reſide in Great Britain. Their rents are remitted to them in ſugar and rum, the produce of their eſtates. The ſugar and rum which the Weſt India merchants purchaſe in thoſe colonies upon their own account, are not equal in value to the goods which they annually ſell there. A balance therefore muſt neceſſarily be paid to them in gold and ſilver, and this balance too is generally found.

The difficulty and irregularity of payment from the different colonies to Great Britain, have not been at all in proportion to the greatneſs or ſmallneſs of the balances which were reſpectively due from them. Payments have in general been more regular from the northern than from the tobacco colonies, though the former have generally paid a pretty large balance in money, while the latter have either paid no balance, or a much

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ſmaller one. The difficulty of getting payment from our different ſugar colonies has been greater or leſs in proportion, not ſo much to the extent of the balances reſpectively due from them, as to the quantity of uncultivated land, which they contained; that is, to the greater or ſmaller temptation which the planters have been under of over-trading, or of undertaking the ſettlement and plantation of greater quantities of waſte land than ſuited the extent of their capitals. The returns from the great iſland of Jamaica, where there is ſtill much uncultivated land, have, upon this account, been in general more irregular and uncertain, than thoſe from the ſmaller iſlands of Barbadoes, Antigua, and St. Chriſtopher's, which have for theſe many years been completely cultivated, and have, upon that account, afforded leſs field for the ſpeculations of the planter. The new acquiſitions of Grenada, Tobago, St. Vincents, and Dominica, have opened a new field for ſpeculations of this kind; and the returns from thoſe iſlands have of late been as irregular and uncertain as thoſe from the great iſland of Jamaica.

It is not, therefore, the poverty of the colonies which occaſions, in the greater part of them, the preſent ſcarcity of gold and ſilver money. Their great demand for active and productive ſtock makes it convenient for them to have as little dead ſtock as poſſible; and diſpoſes them upon that account to content themſelves with a cheaper, though leſs commodious inſtrument of commerce than gold and ſilver. They are there-

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by enabled to convert the value of that gold and ſilver into the inſtruments of trade, into the materials of clothing, into houſehold furniture, and into the iron work neceſſary for building and extending their ſettlements and plantations. In thoſe branches of buſineſs which cannot be tranſacted without gold and ſilver money, it appears, that they can always find the neceſſary quantity of thoſe metals; and if they frequently do not find it, their failure is generally the effect, not of their neceſſary poverty, but of their unneceſſary and exceſſive enterpriſe. It is not becauſe they are poor that their payments are irregular and uncertain; but becauſe they are too eager to become exceſſively rich. Though all that part of the produce of the colony taxes, which was over and above what was neceſſary for defraying the expence of their own civil and military eſtabliſhments, were to be remitted to Great Britain in gold and ſilver, the colonies have abundantly wherewithal to purchaſe the requiſite quantity of thoſe metals. They would in this caſe be obliged, indeed, to exchange a part of their ſurplus produce, with which they now purchaſe active and productive ſtock, for dead ſtock. In tranſacting their domeſtic buſineſs they would be obliged to employ a coſtly inſtead of a cheap inſtrument of commerce; and the expence of purchaſing this coſtly inſtrument might damp ſomewhat the vivacity and ardour of their exceſſive enterpriſe in the improvement of land. It might not, however, be neceſſary to remit any part of the American revenue in gold and

and ſilver. It might be remitted in bills drawn upon and accepted by particular merchants or companies in Great Britain, to whom a part of the ſurplus produce of America had been conſigned, who would pay into the treaſury the American revenue in money, after having themſelves received the value of it in goods; and the whole buſineſs might frequently be tranſacted without exporting a ſingle ounce of gold or ſilver from America.

It is not contrary to juſtice that both Ireland and America ſhould contribute towards the diſcharge of the public debt of Great Britain. That debt has been contracted in ſupport of the government eſtabliſhed by the Revolution, a government to which the proteſtants of Ireland owe, not only the whole authority which they at preſent enjoy in their own country, but every ſecurity which they poſſeſs for their liberty, their property, and their religion; a government to which ſeveral of the colonies of America owe their preſent charters, and conſequently their preſent conſtitution, and to which all the colonies of America owe the liberty, ſecurity, and property which they have ever ſince enjoyed. That public debt has been contracted in the defence, not of Great Britain alone, but of all the different provinces of the empire; the immenſe debt contracted in the late war in particular, and a great part of that contracted in the war before, were both properly contracted in defence of America.

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By a union with Great Britain, Ireland would gain, beſides the freedom of trade, other advantages much more important, and which would much more than compenſate any increaſe of taxes that might accompany that union. By the union with England, the middling and inferior ranks of people in Scotland gained a complete deliverance from the power of an ariſtocracy which had always before oppreſſed them. By an union with Great Britain, the greater part of the people of all ranks in Ireland would gain an equally complete deliverance from a much more oppreſſive ariſtocracy; an ariſtocracy not founded, like that of Scotland, in the natural and reſpectable diſtinctions of birth and fortune; but in the moſt odious of all diſtinctions, thoſe of religious and political prejudices; diſtinctions which, more than any other, animate both the inſolence of the oppreſſors and the hatred and indignation of the oppreſſed, and which commonly render the inhabitants of the ſame country more hoſtile to one another than thoſe of different countries ever are. Without a union with Great Britain, the inhabitants of Ireland are not likely for many ages to conſider themſelves as one people.

No oppreſſive ariſtocracy has ever prevailed in the colonies. Even they, however, would, in point of happineſs and tranquillity, gain conſiderably by a union with Great Britain. It would, at leaſt, deliver them from thoſe rancorous and virulent factions which are inſeparable from

ſmall democracies, and which have ſo frequently divided the affections of their people, and diſturbed the tranquillity of their governments, in their form ſo nearly democratical. In the caſe of a total ſeparation from Great Britain, which, unleſs prevented by a union of this kind, ſeems very likely to take place, thoſe factions would be ten times more virulent than ever. Before the commencement of the preſent diſturbances, the coercive power of the mother country had always been able to reſtrain thoſe factions from breaking out into any thing worſe than groſs brutality and inſult. If that coercive power were entirely taken away, they would probably ſoon break out into open violence and bloodſhed. In all great countries which are united under one uniform government, the ſpirit of party commonly prevails leſs in the remote provinces than in the centre of the empire. The diſtance of thoſe provinces from the capital, from the principal ſeat of the great ſcramble of faction and ambition, makes them enter leſs into the views of any of the contending parties, and renders them more indifferent and impartial ſpectators of the conduct of all. The ſpirit of party prevails leſs in Scotland than in England. In the caſe of a union it would probably prevail leſs in Ireland than in Scotland, and the colonies would probably ſoon enjoy a degree of concord and unanimity at preſent unknown in any part of the Britiſh empire. Both Ireland and the colonies, indeed, would be ſubjected to heavier taxes than any which they at preſent pay.

pay. In conſequence, however, of a diligent and faithful application of the public revenue towards the diſcharge of the national debt, the greater part of thoſe taxes might not be of long continuance, and the public revenue of Great Britain might ſoon be reduced to what was neceſſary for maintaining a moderate peace eſtabliſhment.

The territorial acquiſitions of the Eaſt India Company, the undoubted right of the Crown, that is, of the ſtate and people of Great Britain, might be rendered another ſource of revenue more abundant, perhaps, than all thoſe already mentioned. Thoſe countries are repreſented as more fertile, more extenſive; and, in proportion to their extent, much richer and more populous than Great Britain. In order to draw a great revenue from them, it would not probably be neceſſary to introduce any new ſyſtem of taxation into countries which are already ſufficiently and more than ſufficiently taxed. It might, perhaps, be more proper to lighten than to aggravate, the burden of thoſe unfortunate countries, and to endeavour to draw a revenue from them, not by impoſing new taxes, but by preventing the embezzlement and miſapplication of the greater part of thoſe which they already pay.

If it ſhould be found impracticable for Great Britain to draw any conſiderable augmentation of revenue from any of the reſources above mentioned; the only reſource which can remain to her is a diminution of her expence. In the mode of collecting, and in that of expending the pub-

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lic revenue; though in both there may be ſtill room for improvement; Great Britain ſeems to be at leaſt as œconomical as any of her neighbours. The military eſtabliſhment which ſhe maintains for her own defence in time of peace, is more moderate than that of any European ſtate which can pretend to rival her either in wealth or in power. None of thoſe articles, therefore, ſeem to admit of any conſiderable reduction of expence. The expence of the peace eſtabliſhment of the colonies was, before the commencement of the preſent diſturbances, very conſiderable, and is an expence which may, and if no revenue can be drawn from them, ought certainly to be ſaved altogether. This conſtant expence in time of peace, though very great, is inſignificant in compariſon with what the defence of the colonies has coſt us in time of war. The laſt war, which was undertaken altogether on account of the colonies, coſt Great Britain, it has already been obſerved, upwards of ninety millions. The Spaniſh war of 1739 was principally undertaken on their account; in which, and in the French war that was the conſequence of it, Great Britain ſpent upwards of forty millions, a great part of which ought juſtly to be charged to the colonies. In thoſe two wars the colonies coſt Great Britain much more than double the ſum which the national debt amounted to before the commencement of the firſt of them. Had it not been for thoſe wars that debt might, and probably would by this time, have been completely paid; and had it not been for the

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colonies, the former of thoſe wars might not, and the latter certainly would not have been undertaken. It was becauſe the colonies were ſuppoſed to be provinces of the Britiſh empire, that this expence was laid out upon them. But countries which contribute neither revenue nor military force towards the ſupport of the empire, cannot be conſidered as provinces. They may perhaps be conſidered as appendages, as a ſort of ſplendid and ſhowy equipage of the empire. But if the empire can no longer ſupport the expence of keeping up this equipage, it ought certainly to lay it down; and if it cannot raiſe its revenue in proportion to its expence, it ought, at leaſt, to accommodate its expence to its revenue. If the colonies, notwithſtanding their refuſal to ſubmit to Britiſh taxes, are ſtill to be conſidered as provinces of the Britiſh empire, their defence in ſome future war may coſt Great Britain as great an expence as it ever has done in any former war. The rulers of Great Britain have, for more than a century paſt, amuſed the people with the imagination that they poſſeſſed a great empire on the weſt ſide of the Atlantic. This empire, however, has hitherto exiſted in imagination only. It has hitherto been, not an empire, but the project of an empire; not a gold mine, but the project of a gold mine; a project which has coſt, which continues to coſt, and which, if purſued in the ſame way as it has been hitherto, is likely to coſt, immenſe expence, without being likely to bring any profit; for the effects of the monopoly of the colony trade, it has

has been ſhewn, are, to the great body of the people, mere loſs inſtead of profit. It is ſurely now time that our rulers ſhould either realize this golden dream, in which they have been indulging themſelves, perhaps, as well as the people; or, that they ſhould awake from it themſelves, and endeavour to awaken the people. If the project cannot be completed, it ought to be given up. If any of the provinces of the Britiſh empire cannot be made to contribute towards the ſupport of the whole empire, it is ſurely time that Great Britain ſhould free herſelf from the expence of defending thoſe provinces in time of war, and of ſupporting any part of their civil or military eſtabliſhments in time of peace, and endeavour to accommodate her future views and deſigns to the real mediocrity of her circumſtances. CHAP. III.

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